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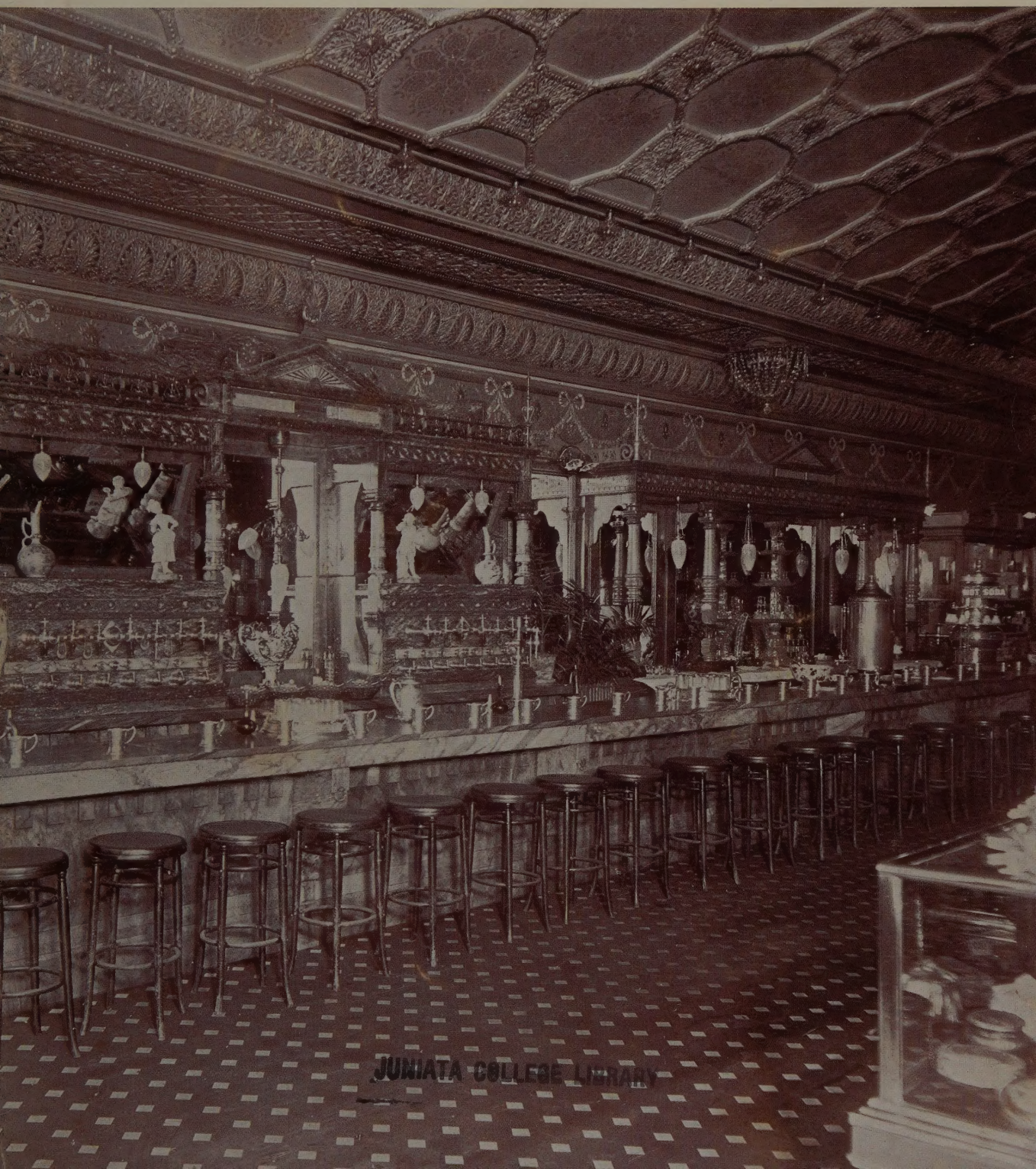
Chicago History

FALL 1972



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An early charity ball, the eighth held in Chicago. "It was a happy thought on the part of some genius," wrote *The Graphic/Chicago* in 1894, "when it occurred to him that it might be possible for society to combine the pleasure of giving with the pleasure of enjoying, and so originated the first charity ball." In this issue Eleanor Page describes Chicago's debutante cotillions, a later development in the name of "sweet charity."

Chicago Historical Society

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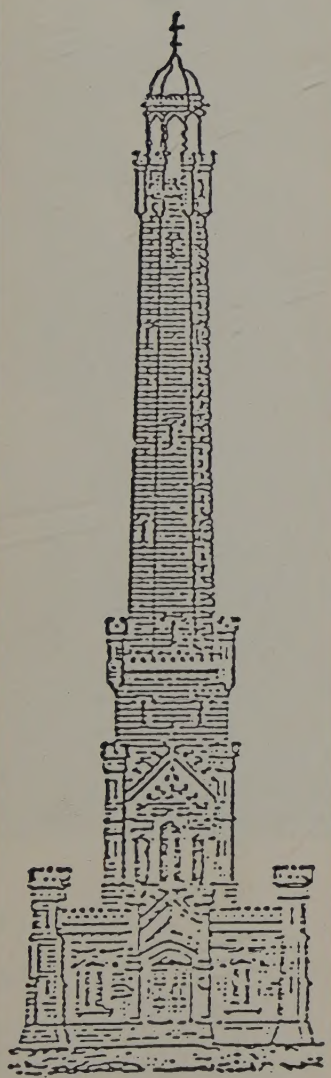
Jos. P. Birren
Drawn by Jos. P. Birren.
FOR SWEET CHARITY.—THE CHARITY BALL AT THE AUDITORIUM.—[Page 27.]

Chicago History

THE MAGAZINE
OF THE
CHICAGO HISTORICAL
SOCIETY



In 1920, when the Chicago Historical Society set out to buy the Gunther collection—the vast, fabled, uncatalogued, and unappraised clutter assembled by confectioner Charles F. Gunther—nobody on its board realized that a new museum building would also be necessary. But in 1928, barely two years after the financial crisis created by the purchase itself was finally resolved, the trustees voted to build in Lincoln Park.

Subsequent acquisitions have required the Society to remodel and add to that building. As the dust of expansion again begins to settle, director Clement M. Silvestro looks back on the Gunther collection and the agonies of its purchase, in an article in this issue entitled "The Candy Man's Mixed Bag."

Chicago Historical Society

Upstairs, at 212 So. State Street, women make and box the candies that will be sold not only downstairs in Gunther's soda parlor, but all over the nation.

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Chicago History

The Magazine of the Chicago Historical Society

FALL 1972
Volume II, Number 2

Cover: Gunther's soda parlor, about 1888. In these elegant surroundings a soda cost 5¢, mineral water 5¢ or 7¢. An almond or chocolate frappe could set one back 10¢. The case at the right held Gunther's famous candies.
Chicago Historical Society

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The Passavant Cotillion—and Others

BY ELEANOR PAGE

Chicago's most important daughters "come out" at the Passavant Cotillion, but it met with serious opposition when it began. There are now more than a dozen group "coming outs" in Chicagoland, for girls of various races, religions, and cultures, and did you know that the Polish girls preceded them all? It's all in a good cause.

THE LIGHTS DIMMED. The band struck up "It's Gonna Be a Great Day" in a lively tempo. Twin columns of young women in white ball gowns and men in white ties, white gloves, and tails, moved across the ballroom floor to the bandstand. One couple advanced to the center and turned to face the packed room.

The announcer's voice rang out clear and strong as the couple started down the steps from the dais to walk back across the ballroom floor: "Miss Joan Peterkin," and a spotlight held her and her father, Daniel Peterkin, Jr., in its white glare.

That was December 23, 1949, and the Passavant Cotillion and Christmas Ball, Chicago's first group debutante presentation, was born.

It was not an easy birth. The struggle to get such a mass presentation launched in Chicago had taken its toll in frazzled nerves and hard feelings. A number of members of the Passavant Woman's Aid Society (now the Woman's Board), including the president, Mrs. Alden B. Swift, were against it.

"I couldn't possibly allow a child of mine to come out at a public thing like that," Mrs. Swift told Colleen Moore Hargrave, who had instigated the party. Edison Dick, president of the men's board [the board of directors] told her, "No one would think of allowing his daughter to be paraded in public like that."

But there everybody was, a sea of distinguished Chicago faces above silks, satins, laces, pearls, diamonds, and white ties, watching thirty-seven young ladies go through their carefully rehearsed paces. Yet for those onstage and behind the scenes the atmosphere was charged.

"We were pioneering," said Helen Tieken Geraghty, producer of such great outdoor pageants as the 1948–1949 railroad fair, "Wheels A-Rolling," who was in charge of the Passavant extravaganza. "Everyone was so tense. The hotel staff was tense. . . . Tom Burke's bald head streamed with perspiration [he was a hotel official]. Tom and I were taking the brunt of things, he for the hotel, me for the ball. Three girls were sick in the Casino before the party.

"The setting was one of the most beautiful ever designed by John Moss [a vice-president of Marshall Field & Company]. John was the only one who minded his own business, and he produced a super miracle."

The idea of holding a debutante cotillion had been discussed at length in Chicago social circles and by boards of a few charitable institutions before the Passavant board took it on. Some were of the opinion that it could become a "traditional" event in Chicago, similar to the Junior Assemblies of New York or the Bachelors Cotillion of Baltimore, but whether Chicago wanted such a tradition was loudly doubted in other quarters.

Eleanor Page is the society editor and a feature and travel writer for the *Chicago Tribune*. She has been present at every Passavant Hospital Cotillion and Christmas Ball including one as the mother of a debutante instead of in her capacity as journalist.

Courtesy the Chicago Tribune

The first Passavant Hospital cotillion, 1949, at the Conrad Hilton Hotel in Chicago, its ballroom redecorated for the occasion. The dance in progress was called the "parasol figure."

Twenty-eight young women in the receiving line for the eighth Passavant Hospital cotillion, 1956, again at the Conrad Hilton.

Courtesy the Chicago Tribune

"It's impossible to organize the mothers of seventy or more debutantes into agreeing on plans for one gigantic party for all of them—and on the guest list!" those opposed pointed out. "Yes, but such a party would be a boon to families of impeccable social standing who couldn't afford a debut party, or for whom a large debut might not be in good taste," said others. Said one mother, "I hate to see a cotillion come to Chicago; it seems so commercial." Said another, "I think it's marvellous, even though there is bound to be a rather heterogeneous crowd at it."

The question, who would take part in the cotillion, caused one of the board's most important members to resign after the cotillion plan was adopted. According to another member, the one who resigned was Mrs. Louis Mann, wife of one of the city's outstanding rabbis. "I took her to luncheon at the Arts Club and pleaded with her not to leave the board," recalled her friend. "She told me, 'I know the daughters of my friends will not be invited'."

The cotillion had been suggested by Colleen Hargrave, silent screen star who came to Chicago as the wife of a widely known stockbroker, Homer P. Hargrave. The board was searching for a different way of raising funds, something other than sponsoring opening nights of this or that cultural activity, something that would be a yearly event, identified with the hospital. Mrs. Hargrave knew of a debutante presentation party in Los Angeles called Las Madrinas which was "very social, hard to get

into." She had also heard about the Debutante Cotillion and Christmas Ball held in New York to benefit the New York Infirmary. She suggested a debutante cotillion as a tradition the board could establish in Chicago.

Despite opposition such as Mrs. Swift's and Mr. Dick's, board members were interested in the proposal. One in favor advised Colleen, "It's a big idea, someone will grab it. Go right to Margaret Reid [Mrs. Bryan S. Reid, later Mrs. J. Leslie White]. She'll push it through, and I'll help."

Carola Mandel (Mrs. Leon Mandel) went to New York to get all of the details about how that cotillion was run. Then the Passavant women held a board meeting to decide the issue. "I didn't go to the meeting," Colleen said. "Bessie Peterkin [Mrs. Daniel Peterkin, Jr.] phoned me as soon as it was over to say the project had passed! Lydia Swift abstained in the voting. Margaret Reid rushed to the phone to notify the papers that we would be having Chicago's first group debutante presentation. I had heard that some other hospital was trying for it—I think it was Children's Memorial—and we wanted to stake out our claim."

So now the women had the cotillion, but did they have the girls? They were certain of two: the Hargraves' daughter, Judy, and the Peterkins' Joan, who became leaders of the two wings of the grand march. Judy and Joan were on the debut list for 1949, so the board invited others on the list to participate.

In May, the debutantes, their mothers and grandmothers, and others considered eligible, were invited to the Casino to hear about the cotillion. They were assured the ball would be conducted with all the dignity and beauty associated with an undertaking of such social consequence and that all of the good taste, charm, and talent of the socially prestigious Woman's Board would be solidly behind the event.

Acceptances were coming in by June. Thirty-seven families agreed to pay $450 each for their daughters to take part.

Another problem arose. The girls were reluctant to choose escorts for the ball and the necessary rehearsals. "How do I know I'll still like John in December?" was the general complaint.

"Margaret Reid got the boys," recalled Colleen. "The boys she invited were the ones she knew through her son, Bryan, Jr., and they were older than the eighteen-year-old girls, they were all out of college—Toto McCormick, Dave Peck, and so on." However, the girls and their partners were paired by height, not personal preference, and while "the girls were overcome at the 'old men,' they loved it!"

It was Mrs. Reid who persuaded Marshall Field & Company to back the first party. The department store "liked to be first in everything," the energetic Margaret reminded officials.

Field's put up $25,000 to underwrite the event. The store also was in charge of the decor which enchanted everyone on cotillion night. Tiny Italian lights were new then, and the decorating staff dressed the ballroom in silver and gold branches twinkling with lights—"a fairyland," all agreed.

Field's paid for the decorations, the music, the debutantes' flowers, the supper, and use of the ballroom and the Skyway suite where the girls changed their clothes. The Conrad Hilton completely redecorated the ballroom and restored to shining perfection its ten large crystal chandeliers, valued at $10,000 each. That first party drew 2,000 guests at $12 each, champagne extra.

The grand march was patterned after the New York cotillion. Then followed the cotillion figures in which the girls and their escorts took part, moving in intricate patterns around the floor, sometimes aided by props such as arches or maypoles.

At that first cotillion a sleigh was the principal prop, pulled by escorts as the girls danced around it. It prompted Homer Hargrave's widely quoted remark, "This is the first time I've ever seen a sleigh pulled by wolves."

37 ARE QUEENS FOR A NIGHT AT DEBUT COTILLION read the headline of a front-page story in

"No one would think of allowing his daughter to be paraded in public like that," said Edison Dick when a debutante cotillion was proposed. Now he approves, and other Lake Forest parents plan well ahead to be sure their daughters will be invited to participate.

Courtesy the Chicago Tribune

the *Chicago Tribune* the next morning. It continued: "The event set a new pattern in Chicago, both in raising money for charity—the free bed fund of Passavant Hospital will receive the proceeds expected to total $50,000—and in social custom."

There were other stories in other years of beautiful parties that were remembered as "the cotillion of the roses," "the cotillion of the white plumes," or "the cotillion of the arches," according to the decor.

The cost of bowing went up until in 1971 it was $1,500 per girl, which, added to the price of her white ballgown, a new dress for mother, perhaps new tails for father, tickets for escorts and a table of friends, and possibly a dinner earlier, can add up to a considerable sum. But still less than it would cost for an individual debut, board members point out.

The women had come a long way from the January day in 1897 when a meeting was held in the residence of Mrs. R. U. Upham to discuss the founding of a ladies' auxiliary to the hospital. Dr. William A. Passavant, Jr., son of the hospital's founder, "presented most clearly" the need for such a society to assist in maintaining the work of the hospital. The women voted to organize, and Mrs. John S. Runnells was elected president. Mrs. Runnells' ten years in office trails the thirty-five years Mrs. John G. Coleman was at the helm and the thirteen years Mrs. Nevins Kirk spent as president or acting president.

Auxiliary members became adept at raising money, starting with a musical play in the Potter Palmer residence in 1900. A bazaar called "Streets of Paris" held in the Coliseum in 1906 raised funds to help wire the hospital for electricity. Another year they recreated the Atlantic City Boardwalk in the Coliseum. Other benefits brought Toscanini and his orchestra to Chicago, and a concert was given by Claire Dux, again in the Palmer mansion.

Meanwhile the hospital moved into a new building and became known for starting a new

era in hospital decorating. Hundreds of visitors came from other parts of the United States and from Europe to see how the Woman's Board made use of color in the decor under the direction of a small committee headed by Mrs. Kirk. But the cotillion was the most ambitious and time-consuming of the board's fund-raising efforts.

Changing times threatened to bring lean years again to the cotillion as young people in the early 1970s rebelled against dressing up and going to such a "privileged" party. "Attitudes were different this year," said a board member of the 1971 cotillion. "We had to sell the parents and the girls that they were lending themselves for a good purpose. We toured many a group through the hospital so the girls could see the free beds and the care that participation in the cotillion makes possible."

How to get an invitation to take part in the cotillion is one of the board's best kept secrets. No one will admit having anything to do with screening the applicants. Being accepted is something like getting into a club. The prospective participant must be known to some of the board members and must have letters of recommendation. There's no problem if a parent, grandparent, uncle, or aunt is on a Passavant board. There have been some "tough fights" over getting certain girls onto the list, say board members. "Several members resigned because the girls they wrote letters for were not accepted. Every year there is a controversy. There is tremendous pressure from some mothers who want their daughters to take part."

Boys have been a problem in the last few years, it is said. "We try to get the ones without too much hair, and who will dress properly," says a member.

Lake Forest continued for some time to be divided on the subject of allowing one's daughter to join with others in a debut affair, and the attitude was not limited to that suburb. But gradually grandmother's feeling about the cotillion reversed itself. Nowadays when a board

Chicago Historical Society

Carola Mandel went to New York to find out how the cotillion there was managed, and brought all the details back to Chicago. Like Mr. Dick, she is still active on a Passavant Hospital board.

member is spotted in Lake Forest, some fourteen-year-old's doting grandma is apt to come up and say, "I hope Joanie's name is on the cotillion list for five years from now."

Although as many as forty-eight girls bowed in one year, eventually the number of participating debutantes was limited to thirty. That number not only makes it harder to get on the cotillion list, but it is a good size for the ballroom. While the women envision a day when daughters whose mothers or grandmothers bowed are the only ones there'll be room for, so far there has been only one second generation cotillion debutante. She is Margaret Mary O'Neill, namesake of her mother, Mrs. T. Emmet O'Neill, who, with customary Passavant Woman's Board aplomb, managed to be mother of the debutante and chairman of the 1971 cotillion simultaneously.

Good music has always been stressed at the cotillions. Nationally known dance bands such as Lester Lanin, Meyer Davis, and Ruby Newman have added luster to the party scene. In recent years they brought with them the young people's beloved loud rock music. Michael Kirby of ice skating and ice show fame has been choreographer and announcer.

There have been no mix-ups in announcing the girls' names since the custom of having each father place his daughter's name on a card in the announcer's hand was established. The year before that had been "a terrible night when Pierre André [radio personality who was the announcer] got the names mixed up. The chairman was in tears and the fathers involved were infuriated," recalled a board member.

At the conclusion of its twenty-third cotillion in 1971, the board was approximately $150,000 shy of having contributed $2,000,000 to the hospital. The most profitable years were 1963, $125,000; 1962, $104,500; 1969, $102,900, and 1970, $98,000.

The board has evolved a cotillion routine which makes it seem as if the party runs by itself. When a girl is accepted she is given a handbook

Courtesy the Chicago Tribune

Some of the young women in the receiving line for the Cordi-Marian Auxiliary Cotillion at the Hilton Hotel in 1965. Their annual debut helps support a settlement house.

with dates for the summer rehearsal, the deadline for obtaining her dress and her cotillion photograph, and other pertinent matters. Fathers and daughters meet for luncheon and their one grand march rehearsal on the eve of cotillion day. A second rehearsal is held with the escorts that afternoon. Board members plan the decor, assist with rehearsals and help direct the dance figures at the ball.

Dresses and flowers are assembled in a hotel suite where the girls and escorts dine before the cotillion. While the girls change into their white

gowns, the boys are entertained at sports movies (the bar firmly closed). Then it's down to the receiving line for an hour or more, and on with the cotillion.

After the cotillion figures comes a scene that never fails to touch the fond parents and relatives looking on. Carrying electric torches in the form of candles, the girls crisscross the darkened ballroom to form a Christmas tree at the bandstand. In position and on cue, their young untrained voices join in the chorus of "I'm Dreaming of a White Christmas" while reflections from a revolving crystal ball, brilliantly spotlighted, give the effect of falling snowflakes. Many a spectator fights down a lump in the throat. So what if the little angels do take their shoes off later for dancing? It's hard to break that spell.

Helen Geraghty, who in 1971 turned the cotillion direction over to her former stage manager, Archie Lang (he directs the St. Luke's fashion shows, too), confines herself to "the technical end, the lighting." It has become so routine, she says, "that I could do it blindfolded, deaf and dumb, and so could the electricians."

Several fathers have become old hands at the grand march, returning in succeeding years to present younger daughters and to give jocular advice to new men in the line.

What lies ahead for the cotillion? "It has been a great thing for the hospital," says a men's board member, "a great money raiser. I hope it will live, but I wonder if we can keep the party as it is. The cotillion faces some real problems. For one thing, it is getting out of step with the times."

Racial and social integration are two of the principal concerns facing the hospital and the cotillion, according to other board members. These situations increasingly intrude on the possible makeup of the cotillion, and while challenging problems have been handled so far without open feuds, there is the feeling that new men's and women's board members are considered not only on the basis of what they can contribute to the hospital, but whether the prospective member has a daughter nearing cotillion age and, if so, would she be acceptable

These 28 young women were presented to Archbishop William D. O'Brien and the Rt. Rev. Msgr. Vincent M. Cooke at the Hilton Hotel in 1960. The peacock colored fan provided the theme for the ball's decor.

Courtesy the Chicago Tribune

Courtesy the Chicago Tribune

Eleven young women at the Amber Ball, sponsored by the Chicago Lithuanian Women's Club. Lithuanian music fills the air and the proceeds go toward scholarships for needy young women.

Courtesy the Chicago Tribune

Three young women, ready for the cotillion sponsored by the Chicago chapter of the Links. A number of agencies and charities benefit from this annual debut.

to the Woman's Board? It has been fairly automatic that daughters of members of these boards are included in the cotillion.

Some feel that the cotillion should be continued as long as it is making money. Meanwhile, they say, the board should be thinking ahead to another way of raising funds. "The board should assign members to come up with new ideas." Others say, "Keep the cotillion, but present it in different ways. The party was smart and timely in the beginning, but now it has to come abreast of the times."

Something no one who has seen a cotillion would want to change is the look of pride on the faces of the fathers as they escort their daughters across the ballroom floor under the spotlight with friends applauding. "It beats a wedding," said one happy father. "After it's over, you get the girl back!"

There are a number of ethnic, racial, and religious cotillions held each year to raise money for numerous causes. Oldest of the ethnic group presentations is the Legion of Young Polish Women's White and Red Ball, begun in 1939 and held each February.

The Presentation Ball, sponsored by the Illinois Club for Catholic Women, was launched in 1958 amidst pomp and circumstance with forty young women being presented to the Roman Catholic auxiliary bishop of Chicago. The cardinal, or the highest ranking churchman available, has since received the girls' curtsies at this Christmas holiday ball. Parents donate $1,200, which includes a table for ten, tickets for their daughter and her two escorts, and a color portrait of the girl.

Young Jewish women whose parents or friends have purchased $20,000 or more in Israel bonds are invited to be presented to the Israeli ambassador at the Bonds for Israel Ambassador's Ball held each June. The first was held in 1955.

The St. Helena's Women's Club of SS. Constantine and Helen Greek Orodthox Church held its first cotillion in 1965. Archbishop Iakovos, Primate of North and South America, and other dignitaries come for this June event. Fathers contribute $500 to have their daughters appear, and families must take a table for ten for another $250.

Young women of Spanish-American heritage take part in the Cordi-Marian Auxiliary Cotillion which benefits the settlement house of the same name. The first one was held in 1963. The father of each girl contributes $250.

Cotillions have enjoyed increasing popularity in the black community. An outstanding event is the presentation sponsored by the Chicago Chapter of the Links, a nationwide organization. The Norshore Twelve, an Evanston group, sponsors a ball downtown. A cotillion benefits Marillac House at 2822 West Jackson Boulevard. Robert L. Thompson scholarships are awarded at the Cabrini-Green cotillion.

Young women of Lithuanian descent take part in the Amber Ball. The Hinsdale Sanitarium and Hospital benefits from the Hinsdale Assembly held at Christmastime in Oak Brook. The Holy Family Hospital Auxiliary (Des Plaines) launched a cotillion in 1966. Christ Community Hospital also benefits from a Christmas cotillion.

At this writing, Samuel Black occupies a free bed in Passavant Hospital. This was made possible by the cotillion. Pedro Gonzalez's children could be learning American ways at the Cordi-Marian Settlement, supported by a cotillion representing young women of Spanish-American heritage. Many cancer victims have benefitted from the cobalt machine at Hinsdale Sanitarium and Hospital, paid for by its Hinsdale Assembly. The young black women at the Marillac House earn the money themselves for their gowns and tickets.

All the Chicago cotillions have been more than just snobbish social events. They are more than frivolous exercises to gratify the vanity or pride of families, or to provide gala nights out. They have raised a great deal of money, and that is the purpose ever in the back of the minds of the board members sponsoring them.

The Expulsion of Chicago's "Blond Boss" from the United States Senate

BY JOEL A. TARR

Only once in its history has the Senate expelled a member after first exonerating him. That "dubious distinction" was earned by a Chicagoan.

WASHINGTON WAS HOT AND HUMID on that July week in 1912. For three days a short, stocky man, dressed in a blue suit and a white tie, with an American flag in his buttonhole, stamped up and down the center aisle of the Senate chamber, verbally defending his right to his seat and challenging his enemies. He was William Lorimer, facing charges that his seat had been purchased. His foes included the most powerful politicians in the nation, among them President William Howard Taft, ex-President Theodore Roosevelt, and Senator Robert M. LaFollette.

"Oh, senators," Lorimer cried, "you may vote to turn me out," but that would be "the crime of the Senate," not evidence of his guilt. "I am ready." While the packed galleries waited breathlessly, the Senate voted 55 to 28 to oust Lorimer.

William Lorimer, the "Blond Boss" of Illinois, was elected to the United States Senate on May 26, 1909, by a coalition of fifty-five Republicans and fifty-three Democrats in the Illinois General Assembly. He emerged as a candidate after a five-month deadlock in which he had blocked the reelection of his former ally, Senator Albert J. Hopkins of Aurora, in retaliation for Hopkins' refusal to support Lorimer's candidate, Frank O. Lowden, in the 1908 Illinois gubernatorial primary. His own election was neither initially planned by the Blond Boss nor expected by his enemies.

Lorimer did not look or act like a political boss. He was unassuming in appearance, except for his reddish-blond hair and bushy moustache, and he usually kept quiet until asked his opinion. "I think there is a time and a place to talk," said Lorimer; "that has been my policy all my life." The son of a Presbyterian minister, he neither drank nor smoked, and he dressed conservatively. He was a devoted family man, declaring, "I don't go to theatres and I don't go out to dinners, with anybody." Newspapermen often compared his demeanor to a minister's.

But those who had observed Lorimer's career found his election no surprise. He had often performed the unexpected, particularly in political comebacks. Starting in the 1880s, Lorimer developed a political base in Chicago West Side wards populated mainly by Irish, Bohemian, and Russian Jewish immigrants. He extended his alliances throughout the city and state during the 1890s. From 1895 to 1904, he was the most powerful politician in the Illinois Republican party, responsible for the election of two governors, two United States senators, and numerous city, county, and state officials. He also served in the House of Representatives from 1895–1901, and from 1901–1909, representing the Illinois Second and Sixth Congressional Districts. There he watched over the concerns of the Chicago meat packers and oleomargerine manufacturers, and counted Chicago "robber barons" traction magnate Charles Tyson Yerkes and banker John R. Walsh among his business allies.

In 1904 Lorimer lost control of the party to a coalition of his enemies led by a former ally, Cook County State's Attorney Charles S. Deneen. The *Chicago Tribune* and *Daily News*,

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Professor Tarr, a specialist in urban history, teaches at Carnegie-Mellon University. His book *A Study in Boss Politics: William Lorimer of Chicago* was published last year by the University of Illinois Press.

Chicago's "Blond Boss"

Courtesy Joel A. Tarr

reform newspapers, gleefully forecast Lorimer's exit from politics, but during the next five years he carefully rebuilt his organization, cultivating friends in both parties and strengthening his ties with powerful Chicago business interests. The friendships and obligations he accumulated at this time bore fruit in his bipartisan election to the Senate in 1909.

Was friendship the only reason? Apparently not, for on April 30, 1910, nearly one year after Lorimer's election, the *Chicago Tribune* printed a confession from Democratic Assemblyman Charles A. White. *Tribune* editor James Keeley actually purchased the confession (published as a story entitled "The Jackpot") from White for $3,250. White wrote that Democratic minority leader Lee O'Neil Browne, a strong Lorimer supporter in 1909, had paid him and several other assemblymen $1,000 for their Lorimer votes. White also said that the assemblymen had been paid for votes on legislation, and that the money had come from a jackpot made up of contributions from businessmen. White said he had planned to expose corruption in the Forty-sixth General Assembly: "The actual act of taking the money was dishonorable; it was dishonest; but the ultimate end was to result in good. That is the way I had it figured out."

The exposé in the powerful *Tribune* set the machinery of the law into motion. Lorimer's enemies in the Republican party, especially Governor Charles S. Deneen and Cook County State's Attorney John E. W. Wayman, sensing an opportunity to retire the Blond Boss, prepared for action. During the summer of 1910, a grand jury convened by Wayman heard two Democratic assemblymen, in addition to White, confess to receiving money from Browne; in Sangamon County, a member of the state senate confessed that one of Browne's lieutenants had paid him also.

They all insisted, however, that they would have voted for Lorimer anyway. They had really supported the Blond Boss because they thought him to be the best man. Such contradictory evidence made convictions difficult to obtain. In June and September, amidst rumors of jury fixing, two separate tribunals refused to convict Lee O'Neil Browne of bribery. The case against Lorimer seemed about to disintegrate.

Early in September, however, ex-President Theodore Roosevelt gave the case new impetus. Hearing that Lorimer was to be present at a dinner in his honor at the Chicago Hamilton Club, Roosevelt announced that he would not attend. To ask him to share a table with such a notorious corruptionist was insulting. Club president John H. Batten prudently withdrew Lorimer's invitation.

Much of the nation's press approved of Roosevelt's self-righteous action. Roosevelt had given the country "an excellent lesson in sound morals," crowed the *Baltimore Sun*, while the *Springfield Republican* called Lorimer the "best snubbed man in America to-day." Roosevelt explained that he had acted because someone had to "take the lead" in showing that Republicans condemned what Lorimer, a member of their own party, had done. Lorimer himself made no comment except to resign from the Hamilton Club.

Meanwhile, the U.S. Senate, acting on Lorimer's own motion, began an investigation of the bribery charges. The Senate Committee on Privileges and Elections assigned an investigative subcommittee, under the chairmanship of Julius C. Burrows of Michigan, which held hearings for three weeks in Chicago and in Washington. In mid-December, 1910, it found no evidence that Lorimer had engaged in bribery or that his election was corrupt. Even if the various confessions were true, the committee maintained, Lorimer still had won by a majority of uncorrupted votes. Privileges and Elections accepted its subcommittee's findings.

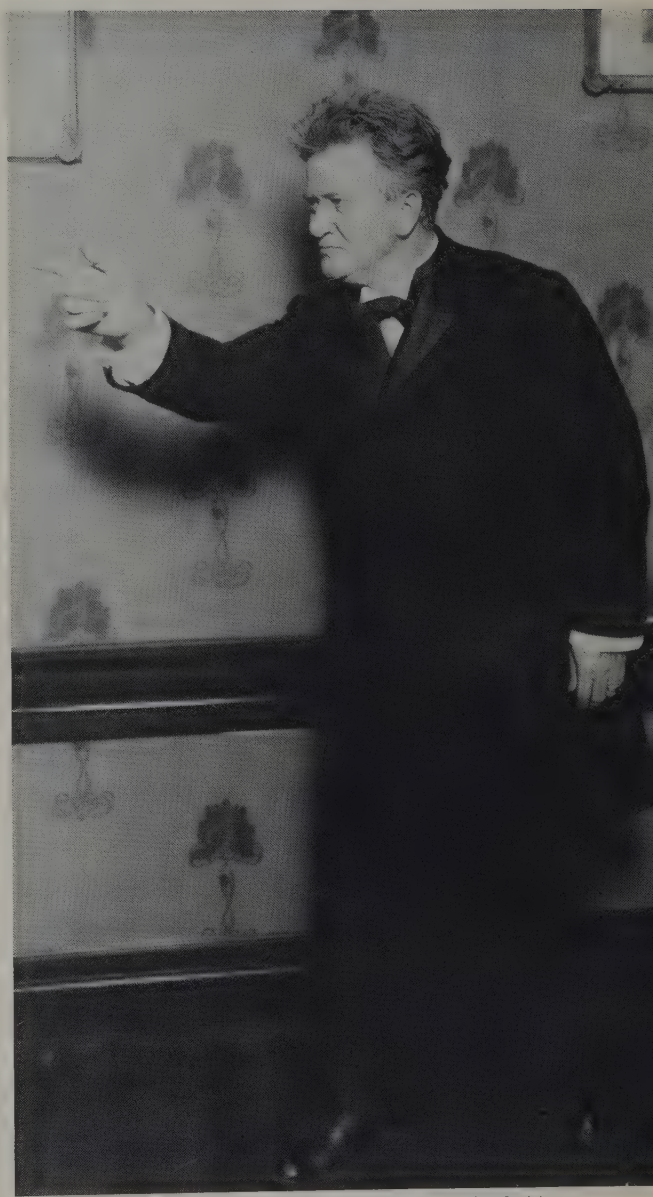
The handsome senator from Indiana, Albert J. Beveridge, then in the flush of his progressive enthusiasm, was one of the committee's two dissenters. Beveridge took the fight to the Senate floor. Republican insurgents Robert M. La

Follette, William E. Borah, and Coe Crawford, as well as conservative Elihu Root of New York, assisted him. The Republican Senate establishment—the "Old Guard" of which Lorimer was a supporter—and a number of southern Democrats led by the picturesque Texan "Joe" Bailey, were Lorimer's principal supporters.

Not only senators were involved. Both Roosevelt and President Taft used their influence to try to secure Lorimer's ouster. Taft, a strong legalistic conservative, held that there was "ample evidence to require the vacation of [Lorimer's] . . . seat," while Roosevelt maintained that it was "simply out of the question" to treat Lorimer as an honest man. Aiding the Lorimer forces were many members of the House of Representatives as well as powerful business figures such as Chicagoan Edward Hines, president of the National Lumber Manufacturers' Association, and W. C. Brown, president of the New York Central Railroad.

On the Senate floor, Lorimer's defenders, using Senate precedent to buttress their position, maintained that since there was no evidence that Lorimer himself had committed bribery, the only question for the Senate to decide was whether there were enough tainted votes to destroy Lorimer's majority. The "courage" rather than the "integrity" of the Senate was on trial, held "Joe" Bailey, in a pro-Lorimer speech. He challenged his colleagues to "be brave enough . . . [to] dare to do what we believe is right and leave the consequences to God and to our countrymen."

But Senator Root insisted that Lorimer's expulsion was necessary to preserve the people's faith in representative government. "It rests with the Senate . . . to do its duty now," said Root, "and . . . purge itself of this foul conspiracy against the integrity and purity of our Government." Other senators maintained that the Lorimer case showed the necessity for a constitutional amendment providing for the direct election of senators. "Will the Senate of the United States be able to maintain its standing



Chicago Historical Society

"Fighting Bob" LaFollette strikes an oratorical pose for the photographer. The Wisconsin senator asked for a committee of men with "free minds" to investigate Lorimer's election.

Chicago Historical Society

Edward Hines, Chicago lumberman, accused of soliciting funds for the Lorimer election fund. He acted at President Taft's request, he said, but Taft wrote that "this really rather passes the limit."

before the country, either for integrity or intelligence," asked Senator William E. Borah, if Lorimer remained seated? A system as "vicious and out of date" as the election of senators by state legislatures had to be eliminated. And, concluded Beveridge, "*American institutions . . . the character of the American people is on trial.*"

Nevertheless, on March 1, 1911, the Senate voted 46 to 40 for Lorimer. Thirty-five Republicans and eleven Democrats voted for him; twenty-two Republicans and eighteen Democrats against. Most important in explaining this result was the split between the Republican Old Guard and the insurgents challenging its authority, and the concern of southern Democrats for Senate tradition. Some senators also felt that the *Chicago Tribune* had acted from less than disinterested motives. A grateful Lorimer wrote Senator Bailey that he had saved him "from a fate worse than death."

But Lorimer was not safe yet. The Helm committee of the Illinois state senate immediately began an investigation into "alleged acts of bribery and official misconduct" by members of the Forty-sixth Illinois General Assembly, seeking especially the source of the funds used to buy Lorimer votes. On March 28, 1911, Chicago lumberman Edward Hines, who had been mentioned in the press as a possible contributor to the Lorimer jackpot, appeared. He denied that he had paid for any votes, but admitted lobbying for Lorimer's election—acting at the special request of President Taft and Senators Nelson Aldrich and Boies Penrose, who wanted Lorimer in the Senate to bolster the Old Guard against the insurgents.

On April 5, however, another witness, Clarence L. Funk, general manager of the International Harvester Company, contradicted Hines's testimony, declaring that Hines had tried to solicit $10,000 from him as a contribution to a $100,000 Lorimer election fund. The Helm committee reported to the state senate that "the election of William Lorimer would not have occurred had it not been for bribery and corruption"; and the state senate asked the United States Senate to reopen its investigation into Lorimer's election.

The Senate insurgents, their ranks strengthened by the 1910 elections, were ready. "Fighting Bob" LaFollette of Wisconsin, leader of the group, pleaded for the appointment of a special committee of men with "free minds" to make a new investigation; and the Senate agreed to the appointment of another subcommittee of Privileges and Elections—eight men, four Lorimer supporters, one anti-Lorimer, and three freshmen senators from the progressive ranks of both parties.

The Dillingham committee (its chairman was William P. Dillingham of Vermont) held hearings from June 20, 1911 until February 9, 1912. Except for a few weeks in Chicago, the committee met in the Senate office building. Its most active members were Democratic Senators John Worth Kern and Luke Lea, and Republican William S. Kenyon. Republican Senators Wes-

ley L. Jones and Dillingham occasionally joined the questioning, while Republican Robert J. Gamble and southern Democrats Joseph F. Johnston and Duncan U. Fletcher seldom spoke. The press was in constant attendance and the small room was often occupied by congressional aides. Throughout, Lorimer sat in the front row looking, reported the *Chicago Tribune*, "bland and humble, the picture of innocent martyrdom."

The Dillingham committee heard a total of 186 witnesses, ranging from Senators Aldrich and Penrose to the cigar clerk at the Chicago Union League Club; but the new witnesses provided few revelations. Most discussed the confused state of Illinois politics in 1909, and the reasons why legislators favored or opposed Lorimer. White repeated his bribery tale, as did the others who had previously confessed, while a number of Illinois legislators admitted that they had been promised favors for their Lorimer votes. Clarence Funk again asserted that Edward Hines had solicited $10,000 from him for a Lorimer election fund, and Hines still denied the charge, maintaining instead that Funk had asked *him* to contribute to Lorimer's election.

Hines's reiteration that he had acted at Taft's request infuriated the President. Taft wrote to his brother Horace, "I can stand a good many things, but this really rather passes the limit," accusing Hines of being "guilty of the most wilful perjury." Aldrich appeared before the Dillingham committee and denied Hines's allegation that he had urged Lorimer's selection: he took "no special interest" in "senatorial elections in various states."

Aldrich's statement, however, was most disingenuous. In March, 1910, Aldrich, Taft, and other Old Guard leaders had agreed to raise a fund to elect conservative congressmen and senators in the upcoming election. Aldrich was responsible for obtaining aid from private interests. From telegrams in code in the papers of George Perkins, a J. P. Morgan & Company partner, it appears that Aldrich solicited Morgan, who agreed to contribute. But the Lorimer exposé on April 30, 1910, upset the arrangement. Perkins advised Morgan to withdraw from the scheme. Morgan agreed. He cabled his son to tell Aldrich that while he would honor previous commitments, nothing further should be done by "individuals or by corporations"—lest it prove "prejudicial to the very interests we want to protect." The Perkins papers reveal a direct tie between corporations and the election of senators in 1910. Quite possibly the same connections existed in 1909 when Aldrich and the Old Guard were concerned about the outcome of the important tariff question, but we have no evidence.

Lorimer himself testified before the Dillingham committee for a full week in December, 1911, denying that he had ever paid or authorized anyone to pay for his votes and insisting that his bipartisan support reflected friendships and obligations he had developed over his political career. Senator Kern, a sharp antagonist, asked where the voters were while these political deals were being made. "Oh, yes," Lorimer responded, in a candid admission of his political philosophy. "That is the way men talk who reach the clouds, you know, when they are making that kind of a speech: that the voters are the men that they are responsible to. Of course they are. But voters are human beings."

The Dillingham hearings concluded with a record of almost nine thousand printed pages. On the last day, Lorimer's lawyer, Judge Elbridge Hanecy, presented a plea of *res adjudicata* to the committee. Hanecy claimed that since the Senate had already cleared Lorimer of the bribery charges, and since the Dillingham committee had uncovered no new evidence, the charges should be dismissed. The committee took Hanecy's plea under advisement.

On March 28, 1912, nearly two months after the close of the hearings, the Dillingham committee voted five to three that the doctrine of *res adjudicata* did apply, and that Lorimer's election was the logical result of Illinois political conditions in 1909. One senator, Wesley L. Jones, who

had voted against Lorimer in 1911, changed his position, saying that the new testimony in the Dillingham hearings had convinced him that Lorimer's election was free of corruption. Kern, Lea, and Kenyon disagreed: although there was no evidence that Lorimer himself had engaged in corruption, the testimony showed conclusively that his election had been bought. Their report held that Edward Hines was "an accessory to the corruption that resulted in the election of William Lorimer to the Senate." Lea stated that since "corrupt methods and practices" were employed in the Lorimer election, it should be declared "invalid."

Throughout June and into July, the Senate debated the case, interrupted only by the national nominating conventions. Aside from Lorimer's own speech, the most important statements for each side were made by Senators Dillingham and Kern. Kern maintained that Lorimer's election resulted from the desire of the "great interests" of the country to have Lorimer's vote in the Senate. The election was the product of a "vicious system of politics which stifles patriotic sentiment, and belittles and corrupts the very fountainhead of American liberty."

Speaking for the defense, Dillingham insisted that Lorimer was the victim of lies and fabrications by Charles A. White and Clarence Funk. Their stories had aroused public opinion and incited Roosevelt to refuse to dine with Lorimer at the Hamilton Club. Roosevelt's rash act had then prejudiced the nation against Lorimer. The case consisted of little more than prejudice. Dillingham stood for what he believed "right and true and just," and supported Lorimer's right to his seat.

Lorimer's speech, the last before the vote, was remarkable, not only for its arguments and passion, but also for the extent to which it violated Senate custom by abusing President Taft, ex-President Theodore Roosevelt, and several of Lorimer's Senate colleagues. He spoke for fourteen hours, over a period of three days.

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Elihu Root: "It rests with the Senate . . . to do its duty now."

Senator Kern, Lorimer said, had never sought the truth but had "slimed and smeared this record all over with suspicion." Funk (his "tongue seemed to be hung in the middle and it ran at both ends at the same time") and White were both liars. Roosevelt and Taft had joined in a conspiracy with the "trust press" of the nation "to misstate the facts." Citing a letter from the President to the ex-President in which Taft exclaimed about the Lorimer case, "I want to win, so do you," Lorimer launched a scathing assault on his opponents. "Win what?" he asked.

> Win a contest? What sort of a contest? In the open? A fair field and a fair fight? Was the sword and shield handed to me, and was I then notified to defend myself that a battle was on? Oh, no; there was no opportunity, no knowledge of what was coming, they were going to win, win, win.

But Lorimer would not resign, as had been suggested. He would, if ousted, return home where the kisses and caresses of his family would supply "compensation enough for the trials and efforts of a lifetime." And ousted he was, by a vote of 55 to 28.

Did Lorimer deserve to be ejected from the

Senate? The common comment of those who had heard his speech was, "I can't help feeling sorry for the man." Even President Taft had doubts; he wrote his wife that while it was a "good thing to get Lorimer out of the Senate, I think he has not been fairly treated." Roosevelt had no such reservations. It "was my fight and it is my victory," he boasted. "The whole thing began when I refused to dine with him at the Hamilton Club dinner."

The press rejoiced in Lorimer's explusion. Typical editorials called Lorimer's ouster a "victory for public decency" and an "extra-ordinary triumph of public opinion." The *Chicago Tribune*, which had begun the case against Lorimer by buying and publishing White's confession, trumpeted: "Truth wins; justice is done." A few newspapers were unhappy, most prominently the *Chicago Inter-Ocean*, for many years Lorimer's supporter: Lorimer had fallen under "the guillotine of the mob" stirred up by "the forces of unscrupulous wealth armed with a venal press." It asked all Americans to pray to God to help prevent such forces from taking over the nation.

Whether Lorimer's election depended upon bribery or whether he participated in the corruption will probably never be known: the evidence is inconclusive. But why did the Senate vote to retain Lorimer in 1911 and reverse itself in 1912? The election of a large number of new senators of both parties in 1910 (they did not take their seats until March, 1911) was crucial. On the 1912 roll call, twenty-one of the twenty-three freshman senators voted against Lorimer, including six Republicans and fifteen Democrats.

The freshmen senators who voted against Lorimer were generally more attuned to the political morality of the progressive period than their predecessors. Many were hostile to political bosses and distrusted them as representatives of corrupt interests and unassimilable lower-class immigrant groups. Dislike of the metropolis also played an important part in the thinking of many anti-Lorimer senators from middle-western, western, and southern states. He symbolized the dangers to American democracy posed by wide-open immigrant cities like Chicago.

Some probably voted for expulsion because of the clamor against Lorimer. Nine senators (six Republicans and three Democrats) who had voted for Lorimer in 1911, now either voted against him or did not vote. Perhaps Lorimer's most fitting epitaph was penned by freshman Democrat Henry F. Ashurst, of Arizona. He wrote in his diary, six months after he had voted for the Blond Boss's ouster, that the Lorimer case was an example of how "civic virtue demands a victim, seizes one, crushes and ruins him, and civic virtue then falls asleep." Whether or not he was guilty of the charges against him, outraged "civic virtue" had indeed ended the political career of Chicago's Blond Boss. He thus earned the dubious distinction of being the only man in the history of the Senate whose election was declared invalid after his right to his seat had been affirmed.

Although never again to hold political office, Lorimer's troubles continued. In 1914, a string of banks that he had started in 1909 with downstate banker Charles B. Munday failed, a victim partly of Lorimer's political difficulties. Two years later, in 1916, Lorimer and Munday were tried in the Cook County Superior Court for misappropriation of funds and conspiracy to defraud. After a lengthy trial, the jury acquitted Lorimer but sent Munday to the penitentiary. During the 1920s, Lorimer attempted to rebuild his fortune through various business schemes, but never with any great success. He appeared in 1926 as an adviser to an old political ally, "Big Bill" Thompson, and helped Thompson win a third term as Chicago mayor, but the days of Lorimer's political power were over and he remained a shadowy background figure. At his death in 1934, Father John S. Bowen eulogized Lorimer as "the father of a family and a churchman"; the mourners preferred to remember him as a politician who never forgot his friends.

The Candy Man's Mixed Bag

BY CLEMENT M. SILVESTRO

Charles F. Gunther, confectioner and collector extraordinaire, *tried to buy Independence Hall and bring it to Chicago. He didn't succeed, but it was one of the few things the Chicago Historical Society did not find in his collection when his widow sold it.*

IN 1920 the Chicago Historical Society proudly announced that it had purchased the Charles F. Gunther collection. In one bold stroke the Society had acquired an important museum of American history and had added to its research library a cache of significant 17th, 18th, and 19th century manuscripts, documents, and books relating to United States history, the history of the Old Northwest, and the history of Chicago and Illinois. Enthusiastic trustees were certain the collection would establish the Society as a major American historical society but there were critics who belittled Gunther's reputation as a collector and were fearful the Society had not only overcommitted itself, but had bought a pig in a poke. Both viewpoints contained elements of truth.

The acquisition was no simple transaction. The Society did not have the means to buy the collection outright, and therefore entered into a complicated contract with the Gunther heirs. The agreement gave the Society more time to raise money but widespread skepticism as to the collection's value coupled with the post World War I depression caused incredible difficulties and conflicts.

At least two generations of Chicagoans associated the name Gunther not with collecting but with candy. His candy factory and store on State Street produced and distributed an infinite variety of sweets that sold throughout the nation. And as for the man himself? He was known as "The Candy Man," an affable, energetic, civic-minded, middle-class German immigrant whose success reassured Europe's downtrodden scattered in Chicago's slums that America was indeed the land of hope and opportunity.

Charles F. Gunther was born on March 6, 1837, in Wildberg, a beautiful town in the Black Forest area of Württemburg, Germany. When he was five years old his family migrated to the United States, settling first in Columbia, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, and a few years later (1848), in the mountain district in Somerset County in the same state. Evidently the location proved unsatisfactory and in 1850 they moved again, this time to Peru, Illinois. Here Gunther obtained a meager education in the local school, after which he began looking for a suitable business opportunity. In this search he tried a variety of jobs. He was a clerk first in a general store, then in a drugstore, then in the post office, and finally in a bank—the Alexander Cruikshank Bank, which represented George Smith and Co. of Chicago.

After five years with the bank he decided to try the ice business, possibly at the encouragement of his brother who was so engaged. In the 1850s and 1860s, Peru, Illinois, was a great ice-packing depot, whence large quantities of ice were shipped to southern cities. He started locally but in 1860, still in his early twenties, Gunther accepted a position with Bohlen Wilson and

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Dr. Silvestro, secretary and director of the Chicago Historical Society, became intrigued with the Gunther collection when he arrived at the Society in 1964. Now a Gunther enthusiast, he has given slide talks on this unusual collector at Chicago's Caxton Club and the Henry Ford Museum Antiques Forum.

Chicago Historical Society

The outer, castellated wall of Libby Prison, "a reconstructed monster of the Civil War," complete with "Uncle Tom's Cabin." It housed part of Gunther's great collection.

Company in Memphis, Tennessee, a leading southern ice firm.

Gunther's timing for moving south was bad. On April 14, 1861, the Confederates fired upon Fort Sumter, and the blockade put an end to North-South trade. Precisely where his loyalties stood in this crisis I have not been able to determine. Whatever the case Gunther, who was of prime military age, did not rush to enlist on one side or the other. Instead, after the ice business prospects melted away, he accepted a position on the Arkansas River steamer, the *Rose Douglas*, in the service of the Confederate government as purchasing steward and subsequently as purser.

The *Rose Douglas* navigated the southern tributaries of the Mississippi, transporting troops, conscripts, and supplies. In April, 1862, Admiral David G. Farragut bombarded New Orleans and by May 1 the city was occupied by General Benjamin F. Butler. In June of 1862 Memphis fell to the Union forces. With the occupation of these two key cities, the *Rose Douglas* found itself blockaded. She was finally captured and burned in Van Buren, Arkansas, by General James G. Blunt's army. Gunther, who was a civilian, was released and permitted to make his way northward to Peru, Illinois.

After the war Gunther made another attempt at banking in Peoria, Illinois, but he soon left to enter the candy business. He started out as a traveling salesman (or "drummer") for the wholesale candy firm of C. W. Sanford of Chicago, but realized that to make money he would have to start his own firm, and in the fall of 1868 he opened a small retail candy business at 125 North Clark Street. By coincidence it was the same year in which the Chicago Historical Society opened its first permanent building on the corner of North Dearborn and Ontario streets. Three years later the Great Chicago Fire wiped out Gunther, and consumed the collection of the Historical Society.

Within a few years the burnt-out district was completely rebuilt, and Gunther was reestablished on the street floor of the McVickers Theater

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Charles F. Gunther, confectioner and collector *extraordinaire*.

Building on Madison Street. During the 1870s and 1880s he prospered handsomely. In 1885 he opened a second and larger store and candy factory at 212 South State Street. His caramels, which he claimed to have introduced in this country, and his quality candy were famous throughout the nation.

Precisely when Gunther began collecting we do not know. By the 1880s Chicagoans who patronized his State Street shop could also visit the second floor to see some of his curios and relics. An Egyptian mummy was said to be the Pharaoh's daughter who discovered Moses in the bulrushes. The other great attraction was the Civil War collection, guns, swords, uniforms, flags, documents, and paintings. Less conspicuous were faded documents, books and manuscripts from all over the world. People were amused and entertained, and the display must have helped sell candy. But not until 1889 did the public realize Gunther was a serious collector.

That year Gunther announced he and his associates had purchased the famous (or infamous) Libby Prison, in Richmond, Virginia. He unveiled plans to dismantle the prison and reconstruct it in Chicago as a war museum. Before the Civil War Libby Prison had been a grocer's warehouse (Libby & Low), on the banks of the James River. During the war it housed captured Union soldiers, and though it never attained the notoriety of Andersonville, it was difficult, uncomfortable confinement, especially during the closing days of the conflict when the impending collapse of the Confederacy created confusion and supplies were virtually nonexistent.

Almost twenty-five years after Appomattox, feelings about the war were still sensitive. Opponents of Gunther's plan felt it would "keep alive memories that had far better be buried." The *Washington Post* asked: "What sort of enjoyment or interest can be extracted from a reconstructed monster of the war—a reminder of dark days of hatred and blood?" Businessmen feared that southern merchants would stop trading with Chicago. One editor warned: "I tell you the bringing of Libby Prison to Chicago as a show will cost her people millions of dollars in the loss of southern trade."

Nothing could dissuade Gunther. In dismantling and reconstructing the building he proceeded with an exactness that would have pleased the most meticulous historic sites specialist. A prominent Washington, D.C., architect named Hollowell made line drawings and sketches. Six hundred thousand bricks, the capstones and sills were carefully numbered. It took six months to dismantle and to ship north. The material filled 132 twenty-ton cars of the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad.

In Chicago the prison was rebuilt at Wabash Avenue between 14th and 16th Streets (just south of the Loop). Around the new museum Gunther built a great stone wall in the ugly castellated Gothic style common in the period—the best surviving example is Chicago's famous water tower. The newspapers reported that the project cost between $125,000 and $150,000, a substantial sum of money.

On September 20, 1889, Gunther staged a gala opening for some 300 dignitaries and guests. Brass bands played old war tunes, army officers and Grand Army of the Republic commanders attended in large numbers. Blue and red flags

fluttered over the gray stone walls. Electric lights blazed from every narrow windowpane. Gunther invited Union veterans who had been incarcerated at Libby, and four appeared for the opening: Captain Eli Foster of the 13th Indiana; James Michael, 5th New York; F. A. Cleveland of the 8th Iowa; and E. M. Heyl, 3rd Pennsylvania Cavalry.

For the first time the general public could see for itself just how extensive Gunther's Civil War collection really was. The prison was four stories high, with nine large rooms. Every room was crowded with cases crammed full of swords, bayonets, guns, uniforms, maps, newspapers, ammunition, camp equipment, and shells. There were portraits of Union and Confederate leaders, prints, documents, manuscripts, and a countless variety of other relics. A featured attraction was a secret tunnel through which some prisoners had made daring escapes, and Foster, a veteran who had helped to dig the passage, was on hand to tell about it. Interior bricks, upon which prisoners had carved their initials and regiments during their confinement, were another feature.

Arouse hatred or animosity? Hardly. The museum was an immediate success and one of the nation's most talked-about attractions. Within three months over 100,000 people had visited Libby Prison. Was it a financial success for Gunther and his associates? We do not know, but one newspaper said stock offered at $110 per share on the day before the museum opened was not to be had a month later at $150.

Overnight Gunther became a collector and celebrity of international reputation. His travels and collecting exploits began to appear in the press. People offered relics which Gunther added to the museum exhibits—for example, the telegraph instrument at the Norfolk and Western Railroad at Farmville, Virginia, used to send the world the news that Lee had surrendered at Appomattox, and a rare account book belonging to President Andrew Johnson while he was in the tailoring business at Greenville, Tennessee. In Washington, D.C., Gunther acquired some material of Charles Guiteau, the assassin of President Garfield, whose letters were already scarce items, sought after in this country and Europe.

Gunther had an unerring sense of what would please the public. It was not surprising therefore to find some rather spectacular exhibits. The beam from which were hanged Payne, Herold, Atzeroldt, and Mrs. Surratt, the Lincoln conspirators, along with the temporary headboards placed over their graves in the jail yard in Washington, created quite a sensation. Likewise the towel placed under Lincoln's head when he lay dying, the blood stains still visible. He displayed the shoe cast from the hoof of the horse that John Wilkes Booth rode away after the shooting of Lincoln. But the most ludicrous exhibit had to

The tunnel inside Libby Prison through which Union soldiers made their escape. Note the pictures above the entrance; every bit of room was used to show as many exhibits as possible.

Chicago Historical Society

be the skin of the serpent that tempted Eve in the Garden of Eden, supposedly taken from a French church. Gunther promised the public that "Old Libby will be a magnificent curiosity shop before we get through with it," and it was.

Elated with the museum's success Gunther made grandiose plans for the coming World's Columbian Exposition. He wanted to bring to Chicago other historic buildings and turn his site into an outdoor museum. When his plan to bring one of the Egyptian pyramids to Chicago proved impractical, he sent agents to Missouri to negotiate for the house in which Jesse James was shot, and to Louisiana to buy "Uncle Tom's Cabin." When word leaked out that Gunther had actually tried to buy Independence Hall and ship it to Chicago, the Washington, D.C., *Evening News* cried out: "In their mad pursuit after historic buildings the modest citizens of Chicago are now said to be reaching after Independence Hall in Philadelphia. A city that could ravish Richmond of the Libby Prison and ask Washington to sell her the Tenth Street Lincoln House would not stop at such a trifle as Independence Hall. She would take anything she could get. Her next move would be purchase of Mount Vernon from the Ladies' Association, the historic sub-treasury from New York, and Faneuil Hall from Boston. Why not? No considerations of sentiment have any weight with Chicago. With her it is only a question of money, and she misses no opportunity to let people know that she has plenty of that." Gunther is said to have replied: "We would have given a good deal for it [Independence Hall] though, if it were found practical to move it."

At the peak of his popularity Gunther became active in politics. For many years he was affiliated with the Republican party, but he was opposed to the protective tariff and joined with the Democrats. In 1897 he was elected an alderman of the important and fashionable 2nd Ward (Prairie Avenue) where many socially prominent and wealthy Chicagoans lived, and served until 1901. (By coincidence the other alderman from the ward was Eugene R. Pike, a Republican who some thirty years later made it possible for the Society to build in Lincoln Park, and whose brother, Charles B. Pike, became president of the Chicago Historical Society.) From 1901–1905 Gunther was city treasurer. He actively sought the nomination for governor, but did not receive it.

Just when things seemed to be going splendidly, Gunther suffered two serious setbacks and from then on nothing seemed to go right. On September 28, 1899, fire gutted his large candy shop and factory on State Street. Several employees barely escaped, and the damage was extensive; according to one newspaper, $150,000 on the building alone, and with very little insurance. Fortunately, two years earlier Gunther had divided his collection, placing a significant portion in storage, and part was on exhibition at the Great Exposition in Omaha, Nebraska. Since Gunther had no inventory an accurate accounting of his losses was impossible.

The following year, 1900, proved equally troublesome. Gunther was president of the Chicago Coliseum Company, organized to build a stadium on the site of the Libby Prison War Museum, which had been dismantled in 1899. The new Coliseum, to be 325 feet long and 172 wide, and able to seat 15,000 people, was expected to cost half a million dollars. During construction the building collapsed and ten workmen were killed. Their relatives and some injured workmen sued both the Coliseum Company and the construction company. Doubtless there were additional financial losses.

Gunther had no difficulty reestablishing the candy business, but the loss of his treasures weighed heavily upon him and he realized his collection should be housed in a fireproof building. Taking advantage of his political position, Alderman Gunther offered the city of Chicago his entire collection in early 1900, if the city would house and care for it. The city council must have taken his offer seriously, and the local press approved. An architect was hired to draw preliminary sketches and in late spring the *Chicago Tribune* printed the drawing of a proposed building

Chicago Historical Society

A more typical scene inside Libby Prison, showing some of the mélange of material exhibited.

in West Park (now Garfield Park) at an estimated cost of $150,000. But one year led to the next and the plan seemed never to leave the drawing boards.

Meanwhile, Gunther was getting on in years. His one surviving son, Burnell, was either unwilling or unable to handle all of the candy business. In 1905 Chicagoans learned that Gunther had sold the retail portion of the business, retaining only the wholesale segment. This, he announced, would give him an opportunity to spend more time with his collection and his work with historical associations. Actually he turned his business talents to real estate. In 1912 he built the Gunther Building, an eight-story edifice at South Wabash and East 11th.

Then the inevitable happened. On February 10, 1920, Charles Frederick Gunther died, at the age of eighty-three. In a will written in 1911, Gunther provided $20,000 for a nephew, A. G. Kleinbeck, of Pittsfield, Illinois, and bequeathed his entire estate to his wife, Jennie, and his surviving son, Burnell, who were also appointed executors of the estate along with Chicago attorney Donald R. Richberg. The collection was obviously a major asset, but it was also the least liquid. Before he died Gunther had borrowed substantial sums to cover his real estate holdings, and according to Mrs. Gunther, left them "quite involved," meaning perhaps that there were inadequate cash reserves to meet taxes, probate costs, and attorneys' fees. The executors of the estate assumed that the collection could be liquidated readily and that all claims could be settled quickly. This did not prove to be the case, and the downturn in the economy following the war did not help matters.

In looking about for a purchaser it seemed appropriate and logical for the executors to turn to the Chicago Historical Society. Gunther had served as a Society trustee for twenty-one years. For sentimental reasons Mrs. Gunther insisted that every effort be made to keep the collection in Chicago even though it might bring a larger financial return if sold elsewhere. Accordingly, the Gunthers spurned overtures from New York dealers and began negotiations with the Society.

In March, 1920, the Society announced that it intended to purchase the Gunther collection for $150,000, reputedly one-half its true value. The news must have surprised Society members and friends. The Chicago Historical Society was a prestigious and genteel cultural institution, but it was also mouse poor. Twenty-four years earlier it had opened a fortress-like, Richardson-style building at Dearborn and Ontario streets; this major capital improvement had absorbed whatever extra money there was. Such a large financial undertaking, at a time when the nation's economy was sluggishly making the transition from a war to peace, seemed unwise.

Discriminating members expressed skepticism about the collection's historical value. Everyone knew Gunther as "The Candy Man" who dabbled in collecting curios and relics. Gunther's various commercial ventures, exploiting his historical collection, and his image as a "popularizer" cast doubts on his reputation as a serious

collector. Others were understandably timid because there was no descriptive inventory. Gunther had bought in large amounts and boxed and stored his acquisitions, but no one had ever viewed or examined his entire holdings. To be sure, Gunther owned some valuable historical treasures, but in effect the Society did not know what it was buying.

To answer the critics, Society president Clarence A. Burley and trustee Dr. Otto Schmidt, himself an avid collector, recruited Dr. F. W. Gunsaulus, president of the Armour Illinois Institute of Technology, to make a public testimonial in support of the decision. In a widely distributed statement Gunsaulus said: "It would be nothing less than a calamity . . . if we as citizens of Chicago do not exert every effort to purchase for the Chicago Historical Society what I have studied and hereby approve as the Gunther collection. . . . The collection will make your historical society museum one of the foremost in the world." Dr. Milo M. Quaife, director of the Wisconsin Historical Society, and Professor Andrew McLaughlin of the University of Chicago's political science department also supplied approving testimonials. The local press roundly applauded the Society's decision. But few realized the problems that lay ahead.

With the trustees' approval president Burley and his associates plunged into the difficult task of raising $150,000. Telegrams and letters were sent to prominent Chicagoans requesting funds, and in the initial burst of enthusiasm gifts began to come in. Joy Morton, William Wrigley, Jr., and Julius Rosenwald each gave $5,000.

Hardly had the fund-raising efforts begun in earnest when rumors spread that the Gunthers and their agent, Mr. Forrest G. Sweet of Battle Creek, Michigan, were surreptitiously taking things out of the collection and selling them in the East. The rumors were so persistent that alarmed Society officials engaged the Pinkerton Agency to watch Mr. Sweet. After several weeks' surveillance, and finally a direct confrontation, the agent was absolved. But the suspicions remained, and the distrust certainly did not make fund raising or negotiations any easier.

By mid-April, 1920, the Society had raised $30,000 and was in a position to negotiate a contract. It was not a simple document, and is yet another example of the truism that it helps to engage a shrewd lawyer. In Donald Richberg and Associates the Gunthers had that. Signed on April 21, 1920, the contract provided that upon payment of $30,000 the Society could remove the collection at the Gunther Building and elsewhere to the Chicago Historical Society building. Then the Society could select and retain title to $30,000 worth of articles from the collection. Who would determine the value of the articles so selected? The Gunther estate retained Forrest G. Sweet, and the Society appointed a committee headed by Dr. Otto Schmidt and Robert C. Fergus. Upon payment of an additional $20,000 in a specified period the procedure would be repeated.

Now the Society had the privilege of opening, examining, and even exhibiting the contents of all trunks, boxes, crates, and other packages, but title to them, except for the articles selected and paid for by the Society, remained with the estate. Objets d'art were not included.

The contract further stipulated that one year later, April 27, 1921, the Society had the option of paying the remaining $100,000 to own the entire collection. However, the Society was under no obligation to exercise this option and if it did not the Gunther estate would claim what remained. Thus, in the event it could not raise the last $100,000, the Society was not committed to pay the full purchase price. Another provision permitted the Society to sell items outside its field of interest and credit the money toward the purchase price. However, Sweet had to agree to each sale and to the price paid, an arrangement that at times proved to be very difficult. The provisions written into the contract to safeguard both parties ultimately became stumbling blocks in raising the money and disposing of parts of the collection.

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The Coliseum during the 1908 Republican Convention. Note how much of the architecture of Libby Prison remained unchanged.

During the first week of May, 1920, under the watchful eye of Pinkerton agents, the entire collection was moved. The confusion and disarray at the Chicago Historical Society must have been something to behold. The collection occupied the entire lecture hall in the central part of the building, and the entire basement except for the boiler room. It fell upon the shoulders of librarian Caroline McIlvaine, the Society's only professional staff member, and her few assistants to begin the laborious task of arranging, unpacking, repacking, and organizing.

Having made its first payment of $30,000, the Society proceeded to select items equal to that value. Some of the objects chosen and the values assessed were: the first U. S. patent issued and signed by George Washington, 1790, $2,000; Washington's seal, $1,500; Washington's will, a duplicate signed by him, $2,500; three Indian peace medals (two of George Washington, one of Van Burean), $850; Lincoln's famous dispatch to General Grant: "Let the thing be pressed," $4,000; Robert E. Lee, farewell letter, $1,500; a letter of U. S. Grant to General Pemberton at Vicksburg, $1,500; General Anthony Wayne's copy of the Treaty of Greenville, 1795, $1,000. There were also some important Chicago items in this initial transaction, including the Thompson surveying instruments, a John Kinzie broadside and letter, and an 1836 map of Chicago.

Meanwhile the Society organized a women's fund-raising committee headed by Mrs. George A. Carpenter and including Mrs. Cyrus H. McCormick, Mrs. George Isham, Mrs. Arthur Farwell, and Mrs. Robert Gregory. The ladies rallied around the slogan, "Save the Gunther Collection," and made elaborate plans at a tea at Mrs. Carpenter's house at 954 North Dearborn Street. Mrs. Frank O. Lowden was made honorary chairman of the Ways and Means Committee. The indefatigable Miss McIlvaine guided their work. She knew the importance of dramatizing and publicizing the Gunther treasures and

Two ladies of importance during the acquisition of the Gunther Collection by the Chicago Historical Society. At left, Mrs. George A. Carpenter, the former Harriet Isham, "intractable" and "tenacious." She wanted the Society to retain all the Americana and build a museum in which to show it. At right, Caroline McIlvaine, the Society's librarian, who undertook the "dirty job" of inventorying most of the collection.
Chicago Historical Society

arranged for the local press to visit the Society to see the collection. The newspaper stories generated interest and facilitated the flow of gifts.

By the first week in June, 1920, the Society had raised another $20,000 and was ready to select more materials. In this lot came the famous *Cosmographiae Introductio* by Waldseemüller, 1507, the first edition of the book which suggested the name America for the North American continent. Its price was $1,200; a few years ago it was appraised at $25,000. Along with the *Cosmographiae* came a number of signed autograph letters and autographed documents and signed documents relating to American revolutionary history. Another prize was sixty-four Northwest Territory documents and letters containing important American Fur Trade Co. papers, Indian treaties, and the earliest known manumission of Negro slaves at Fort de Chartres, November 12, 1763.

Also important were eighteen manuscripts concerning the French and Indian War, priced at $1,200; two large trunks of books valued at $10,500, and some museum items, including a William Henry Harrison campaign flag of 1840, a secretary, table, and chair of Confederate President Jefferson Davis, some rare daguerrotypes of the Chicago courthouse prior to the Fire, and three early views of Galena, Illinois.

Attention now turned toward arranging for the sale of Gunther material outside the Society's field of interest. There was great optimism that a substantial part of the purchase price could be met in this manner. Throughout the summer, at what only can be described as a very dirty job, Caroline McIlvaine and her hard-working staff went through fifty-three large trunks listing and classifying the contents. Her report to the trustees in October, 1920, was the first descriptive inventory and revealed the wide-ranging character of Gunther's collection.

There was an exceedingly fine collection of sixty-four volumes by fifteenth-century printers. Some were the only copies recorded in any American library, and there was a French imprint of which the only copy was credited to Rouen. Foreign books on theology, medicine, and philosophy printed after 1500 filled thirteen trunks. A large collection of foreign manuscripts had been separated into European and Oriental groups. The oriental manuscripts were on palm leaf, brass plates, scrolls, and stone tablets. Many were undecipherable. Miss McIlvaine invited Dr. Henry Breasted of the University of Chicago to examine them. There was a lot of foreign ephemera containing many valuable broadsides.

American manuscripts arranged by centuries filled two trunks. American books and newspapers were sorted and boxed up without even a listing. Manuscripts on music, some antique, some religious, and some operatic, and sheet music filled another trunk. There were special collections: Shakespeareana, Washingtoniana, Lincolniana, Mexicana, art books, Mormon literature, bibles, miniature books, atlases, and Guntheriana—hundreds of letters authenticating articles in the collection. The paintings, prints, framed pictures, furniture, historical objects, photographs, and engravings were segregated in the basement and were hardly touched. Miss McIlvaine decided it would be unwise to open the cases of Libby Prison material.

"Candy Man" Gunther had quite a mixed bag, but the content was not always in the best condition. Packed and stored for years in warehouses or lofts, the collection had suffered. The monumental task of cleaning, sorting, and organizing fell upon the Society. It was an expense never calculated as part of the cost for acquiring the collection, but it should have been.

Notwithstanding Miss McIlvaine's heroic organizing efforts, the Society's trustees realized that a sale might be months away. The deadline for meeting the balance of the contract, nearly $90,000, was fast approaching. Early in 1921 the trustees decided to hire a professional fund raiser, Mr. William Stokes. Immediately he equipped and established an office downtown and launched into a letter-writing campaign soliciting funds—his first error. In all fairness, the downturn in the economy that year did not make matters easier. From Mr. Francis A. Dewes, president of the Standard Brewery, Stokes received the following tart reply: "I beg to inform you that since prohibition became the law of the land, I have eliminated all donations and contributions of whatever kind."

Edward E. Ayer rapped Stokes' knuckles even harder. "I have been familiar with Mr. Gunther's collection and his collecting for about thirty-five years, and know he had some good things, and a good many that were not. He offered this collection repeatedly, so I have understood, for $100,000. It seems our Society has offered much more than that for a portion of it." Ayer went on to remark that if Stokes had any idea how much he had given to the Field Museum and the Art Institute he "would not presume to write asking me for a contribution for the Gunther collection." It became apparent before long that Stokes' employment was a fiasco. His monthly expenses, including salary, were slightly more than $1,000. The total sum collected in a period of four months was slightly over $8,000, of which $5,000 had been obtained by Miss McIlvaine. He was dismissed on April 1, 1921.

Another stumbling block appeared when the

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Two frauds from the Gunther Collection. Above, an obvious one, "Skin of the serpent which seduced the first woman." Hanging inside the frame are various testimonials to its "authenticity." Below, "Washington's clock," which fooled even the knowledgeable.

women's fund-raising committee and the Society's executive committee began to feud. President Clarence A. Burley, a patient, kindly man, found his adversary, Mrs. George A. Carpenter, the women's committee chairman, intractable. The small, attractive Mrs. Carpenter, the former Harriet Isham, was as tenacious in her views as she was direct in her expression. First, she felt the trustees had made an error in not elevating their sights when they launched the fund drive. The commitment should have included a proposal to build a new museum building to house the collection. Limited goals were not her style, and in this respect she showed imagination and boldness.

In addition, as it became apparent that money from the general public would not be forthcoming, the trustees were eager to work with Sweet in selling things. The women's committee did not want any sales until the collection could be effectively organized, and insisted that under no circumstances should any of the Americana collection be sold. Moreover, Mrs. Carpenter misunderstood some terms of the contract, particularly the arrangement that permitted the Gunther estate to retain title and thus ownership of material not transferred to the Society. She did not want the Society to clear everything with Mr. Sweet.

Last, the men and women disagreed over the handling of the so-called Gunther Fund. The ladies suspected the men were using the fund to defray normal operating deficits. To safeguard the funds they raised, the ladies therefore established their own Gunther Fund in a separate account and wrote their own checks for fund-raising expenses, in violation of the Society charter. Even when the ladies succeeded in passing an amendment to the by-laws enlarging the executive committee with the specific purpose of placing Mrs. Carpenter in that slot, relations remained strained.

The controversy continued for almost three years, a strong undercurrent amidst all the cooperative efforts to bring the project to a successful conclusion. To make matters worse, Mrs. Carpenter, who was also the Illinois regent for the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association, wanted to acquire Gunther's George Washington clock for Mount Vernon. She offered the Society $1,500 for it, but Sweet insisted on $5,000, and despite her repeated pleas, the executive committee turned her down. Ironically, the clock proved to be of a much later period, not an authentic Washington artifact, so in effect the Society lost $1,500.

As the anniversary date of the contract approached, there was not the slightest possibility that the Society could meet its commitment. Even before the year was out Richberg was pressing the Society for a payment so the estate could meet its taxes and probate court expenses. On March 31, 1921, the Society negotiated the first of many ninety-day extensions of its contract. The Gunthers were not obligated to agree to this, but both sides recognized that the arrangement they had entered into could not be terminated without serious losses to both parties. Payments throughout 1921 were very small but the attorneys were still able to close the estate in late September. Control of the collection now rested with Mrs. Gunther and Burnell Gunther. Thereafter, the Society would have to deal with them directly, and with Sweet whom the Gunthers had kept on as their agent.

The only bright spot in that dismal year of 1921 was the prospect of making a substantial sale of books and incunabula to Henry Huntington. In November a lot including seventy-one incunabula and six atlases went to Huntington for $15,000. At today's prices the atlases alone would exceed Huntington's cost by $25,000, and the Mexican imprints were a bonanza for the railroad magnate. They included the fourth book published in the Western Hemisphere, which is the first surviving copy of a Mexican imprint: Juan Zumarraga's *Doctrina Breve, muy provechosa*, Mexico, 1543. Another Mexican rarity: Alonso de Molina, *Diccionario Mexicano*, the first dictionary published on the American con-

Two gems from the Gunther Collection. Left, Lincoln's piano, shown on exhibition in the Society's former building; below, the surrender table from the McLean house in Appomattox Court House, the Virginia town where the Civil War was ended.

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tinent. Neither book has appeared at a sale or auction since.

Then Huntington sent his librarian, Henry Bliss, to Chicago and he selected an additional 2,000 books, including all the bibles, and these were sold to Huntington for $25,000. For a mere $40,000, Huntington walked off with a treasure trove.

The Huntington sale was the single largest ever made out of the entire Gunther collection. It came at a critical time, and with the funds another transfer was made possible. In March, 1922, the Society gained title to a collection of letters and documents of the federal period, including George Washington family papers, American Civil War letters containing a particularly fine set of U. S. Grant letters, an Illinois Mormon bank ledger, California prints and cartoons, and miscellaneous items.

By mid-summer of 1922, $55,000 was still due the Gunthers, with little prospect for raising it quickly. The Gunthers kept pressing the Society for money and as none was forthcoming, they began to pressure Mr. Sweet to sell things out of the collection. The Gunthers still retained title to the Abraham Lincoln furniture. Fear that some of this priceless Americana might be sold to satisfy the debt raised the hackles of the ladies again and they bombarded Mr. Burley with letters reminding him of a trustees' resolution to keep the Americana items of the Gunther collection intact. But now even the trustees expressed doubt that they would be able to honor this resolution. The fact that the Gunthers could terminate the agreement with due notice and sell the remaining articles caused the trustees untold anguish.

Yet one had to appreciate the Gunthers' position. Their financial problem was far from solved. Mrs. Gunther wrote to Burley in October, 1922, pleading for money. "My son is worrying himself almost sick over money matters." The Gunthers had an unexpected income tax bill for nearly $7,000, and $5,000 in taxes and interest due on a mortgage of their St. Paul property. To top it all, they were building a house in Los Angeles and might have to halt work on it.

Something drastic had to be done and this time the men finally took the initiative. Early in 1923, they elected to the board a man who took an aggressive role in the fund raising, Charles A. Munroe of Chicago, a successful lawyer and utilities executive. Munroe promptly solicited funds from people and corporations and within a few months raised $15,000.

Next the hardheaded businessmen on the board began to press the Gunthers to renegotiate the Society's obligation. They offered to pay the balance of $55,000 in thirty days if the Gunthers would discount the amount by $10,000. Burley bluntly told Burnell Gunther: "Many people think it a great mistake to have had anything to do with the collection and it is very difficult to get any enthusiasm for a civic purpose of this character."

In reply, through a new attorney, Henry Harned, Burnell Gunther reminded Burley that he and his mother could have sold the collection elsewhere and at a higher price, and that they would have had their money by this time. All this would have made a great difference to them in closing the estate. Gunther argued that they really were entitled to interest after the Society's purchase time was up. He urged the Society to sell some articles, but here was the crux. The most salable items were those the Society was committed to keep.

While these negotiations were going on the Society received an unexpected gift from an Illinois Union veteran and seed tycoon, Albert Dickinson. He gave $5,000 so that the Society could take the title to all the Lincoln collection, a fraction of what it would bring today. Then the Society sold a second Shakespeare folio to Henry Folger for $5,000. With the funds the Society gained title to Washington's sword, $500; his suit worn at the second inauguration, $500; Lincoln's carriage, $2,000; Martha Washington's needle case and thimble, $50; Henry Clay's dresscoat, $100; an Andrew Jackson flag, $100; the Lovejoy press, $250; and the Putnam chain, $1,900.

Throughout 1923 the Society continued to press the Gunthers to reduce the payment, sending treasurer William H. Bush to see the Gunthers in Los Angeles. These efforts so irritated the Gunthers they were prepared to abrogate the contract. With slightly less than $30,000 due, both sides reached a compromise in September, 1923. The Gunthers agreed to accept $25,000 in full settlement provided it was made by the 30th of September. Essential to the agreement was the return to them of the gold nugget found by John Marshall at Coloma, California, in 1848, the discovery of which triggered the California gold rush. Valued at $5,000, it could not be sold at even $4,000. At a special meeting on September 19, the trustees accepted the offer. To meet the conditions they sold over $21,000 of securities held in unrestricted funds. With the final payment came some treasures: the cession papers transferring the Louisiana Territory from Spain to France, and France to the United States, valued at $20,000; the Appomattox surrender table; the Lincoln piano; Illinois Mormon material; 10,000 miscellaneous American manuscripts, 17th–19th century; and 5,000 books.

After three and a half incredibly difficult years the Society finally acquired the entire Gunther collection. But all was far from settled. It took three more years to arrange for the sale of nonrelated materials. Eventually the Egyptian mummy, the Peruvian collection, the Inca's head, the Aztec pottery, the Mexican material, and the African and island collection were sold to the Field Museum for $500.

In 1925 the Society made a contract with the American Art Galleries of New York City to auction forty-two boxes of books and manuscripts. Vice-president of the Galleries, Arthur Swann, catalogued the collection and arranged two sales. An exchange of correspondence with Miss McIlvaine gives some insight into the difficulties he encountered. The condition of the material left a lot to be desired. Some originals turned out to be facsimiles. Others turned out to be forgeries. Gunther's collecting zeal had been undisciplined.

Swann said: "Apparently the old gentleman was willing to accept anything that the seller told him." On another occasion: "It is too bad that old Mr. Gunther was so imposed upon, but the wonder is that he did not fare considerably worse than he did." And just before the second sale Swann wrote, "The cataloguing of this material

has been the most difficult that we have ever encountered in our entire experience. We have tried to create interest by reading some of these almost impossible documents, the result has been that the time given to the cataloguing of them will mean a distinct loss in dollars to the association and I believe that the commission received will not even pay the salaries of those engaged in the work." The two sales, one in 1925 and the other in 1926, fetched almost $22,000, which coincided almost identically with the amount of money that the trustees had borrowed from unrestricted funds and which they then proceeded to replace.

What I would be curious to learn is how the Society rid itself of the miscellaneous curios and articles. What a conglomeration! It ranged from a back scratcher from Afghanistan made from the leg of a bird, colored black, twenty-two inches long, to a ukelele used by the natives of Luzon, and included playing cards, fans, flints, the hair of Napoleon and Empress Josephine framed, a napkin ring used by Charles X of France, Roman antiquities, textile samples, tobacco boxes, wood carvings, writing sets, powder horns, watches, medals, textiles, a vest worn by Napoleon, shoes, costumes, armor, and on ad infinitum.

And how do we evaluate a man like Gunther? He stands in sharp contrast to a connoisseur like Edward E. Ayer, who was one of his harshest critics: "I have never been in sympathy with one thing with regard to Mr. Gunther's collecting. The great aim of my collecting in the different ways for the Field Museum and the Newberry Library has been to benefit the public and I have always made a stated rule that anything I had of the most valuable books and manuscripts, or anything else put into these institutions or in my own private house or library, was free to the public to photograph and use under all conditions, and as you all know, Mr. Gunther put these things away where ninety percent of them have been of no service at all during his life to scholars and students."

Gunther's approach to collecting was instinctive. Without academic background or sophistication he seemed unable to define a field for himself. What he did have was boundless curiosity, and a terrible compulsion to collect everything. If it was old, if it was a first, if it had an important historical association or had been the property of a prominent world citizen, Gunther acquired it. Condition seemed to be of secondary importance. He gathered and gathered and gathered. In the process he brought together some truly significant treasures. True, once in a while he was duped, but so has been the most sophisticated collector. Can you imagine the fun he had poking in the curio cabinets and antiquarian shops of the world selecting this and that, or dickering with other collectors for an item he felt he simply had to have?

Little has been written about Gunther and no substantive evaluation of his collection has ever been made. Yet we must consider him one of the most important collectors of the period, as well as a colorful one. Laugh as you may at the curios, the forgeries, and the esoteric in what could vie for the most heterogeneous collection ever put together, yet in the tons of ore were choice items, acquisitions that form a major part of the Society's collection today. Hats off to those brave Society trustees who made that crucial decision in 1920.

Will a collector like Gunther ever appear again? Perhaps not on such a scale, but others will always come along. Though they are euphemistically called collectors they really are afflicted with a disease—a disease that has the fortunate by-product of keeping museums and libraries like ours in business.

A Lincoln Park Legend

BY JOHN CLAYTON

How many skeletons are buried in Lincoln Park? More than one.

THE QUESTION MOST FREQUENTLY ASKED by visitors to the Chicago Historical Society is about the burial vault that stands in Lincoln Park just northeast of the Society's building. This well-proportioned mausoleum, built of Lockport stone and surrounded by a steel mesh fence, carries a one-word inscription, COUCH. When it was new it had a well-tended garden, and its handsome wrought iron fence was still standing in 1902. It is one of two relics of the years when a section of Lincoln Park south of Armitage Avenue (then known as Center Street) was the public cemetery of Chicago. The modest headstone of the other remaining burial place, near the Academy of Sciences, indicates the grave of David Kennison, last survivor of the Boston Tea Party, who died in Chicago in 1852 at the age of 116 years.

Many reasons have been advanced for the continued presence of the Couch vault within the confines of Lincoln Park. A letter in the files of the Chicago Historical Society from George A. Fink, attorney at law, dated June 15, 1956, states that when the Couch family purchased the lot a hundred years earlier they received a warranty deed from the city of Chicago, and that the family had refused to relinquish its claim or permit the disinterment of the bodies within the crypt. That version of Couch history is far-fetched, however, because there would be no hindrance under the legislation of the state of Illinois creating the park for the city to acquire the land by condemnation, no matter what the nature of the deed. Charles Collins, a researcher as well as a fine columnist, said (Sept. 1, 1938) in the *Chicago Tribune's* "Line o' Type" that the tomb was permitted to remain for economic reasons. In a story about Lincoln Park May 6, 1951, the *Tribune* had this to say about the vault: "Why does the crypt remain in a public park? There are two stories. One is that the United States Supreme Court ruled in the late 1800's that burial lots belong to the dead, not to the living. The other is found in *A History of Lincoln Park*, published by the Board of Lincoln Park Commissioners in 1899, which states that because of the vault's massive construction it would cost too much to move. The article added: 'So far as is known, Ira Couch's body was the only one placed in the crypt.'"

Not so, indicates a *Tribune* story about two years later, which quotes Johnson Couch, grandson of James Couch and the last Couch living in Chicago, as saying there are at least three bodies: Ira Couch, his father Ira House Couch, and a family friend who died in the Tremont House. Couch remembered his father, Ira, son of James, as saying there are thirteen bodies in the vault.

George Schreiber, calling attention in the *Tribune*, August 2, 1960, to the deplorable state of the grounds immediately surrounding the tomb, said of the continued presence of the crypt: "The Couch family fought the removal [to another cemetery] and the vault was allowed to remain. . . . Family members, all but one of whom have moved from Chicago, believe there are seven bodies in the vault. There are five other Couches besides Ira, and a family friend who died in the Tremont House. There is no record of names. . . . Ira Couch, great grandson, now an Omaha resident, said his family under-

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John Clayton, retired Chicago advertising man and former foreign correspondent, is responsible for the *Illinois Fact Book*, published by the Southern Illinois University Press in 1970, and the historical section of the *Illinois Guide & Gazetteer*, published by Rand McNally in 1969. Our readers may remember his article, "How They Tinkered with a River," in the Spring 1970 issue of *Chicago History*.

Chicago Historical Society

Ira Couch, Chicago hotel keeper and realtor, d. 1857, whose body still rests in Lincoln Park. No one knows for certain how many of his relatives are interred there with him.

stands that they have been deprived of the right of maintaining the tomb by an Illinois Supreme Court decision made when the park district was organized."

Twenty months later, on April 28, 1962, the *Chicago Daily News* stated that a court order barred removal because the stone blocks were riveted together and the tomb could not be dismantled without being demolished.

Because of these manifest discrepancies it seemed profitable to explore carefully their possible sources, and from legal and other records to try to unravel the Couch enigma.

Ira Couch, first to occupy the crypt, and his older brother James were born in the state of New York, James in 1800 at Fort Edwards, and Ira in 1806 in Saratoga County. James had several jobs before he found the employment that seemed to suit him best—hotel management. Ira was apprenticed to a tailor. In 1832 he bought up the balance of his time and opened a tailoring establishment at Jamestown, New York. The following year he married Caroline E. Gregory. (James remained unmarried until 1847, when he wed Elizabeth C. Wells in Chicago.) In the early spring of 1836, not too happy with their prospects, James and Ira pooled their resources, purchased a stock of men's furnishings in New York City, and set out for Chicago by way of the Hudson River and Erie Canal to Buffalo. In that port, unable to obtain transportation on a steamer, they chartered a schooner for the trip through the lakes. In Chicago, they rented a storefront on Lake Street between Dearborn and Clark, and found rooms at Alanson Sweet's frame boarding house and saloon a few doors away, at the northwest corner of Dearborn and Lake.

Chicago at that time was a raw, fast-growing frontier village with unpaved streets and few sidewalks, not incorporated as a city for another year. Because of James's hotel background it took the brothers little time to realize that such an establishment, no matter how mean, offered a good opportunity for profit in a thriving frontier community. During the fall after their arrival they purchased the boarding house from their landlord and converted it into a hotel on the American plan, the Tremont House. They dispensed board and room at a fixed fee, and served meals to the public at rates established by state law—25¢ for breakfast and supper, and 35½¢ for midday dinner.

In the autumn of 1839 fire broke out in the Tremont House. There were no hydrants, but water was available from the nearby river and from a horse trough and pump at Lake and Wabash. Neighbors, who were required by ordinance to have buckets available and bring them to any blaze by day or by night, did their best to put out the flames. They kept the fire from spreading, but the hotel burned to the ground. Insurance records showed that besides the building, the Couch brothers lost furnishings valued at more than three thousand dollars. This was not too serious, however, for the brothers, by purchase or lease, had acquired several city lots in the vicinity. On one of the leased parcels diagonally across from the burned-out building, they built a new and much larger Tremont House with frontage of 180 feet on Dearborn and

Jevne and Almini, Chicago Historical Society

The Tremont House at Dearborn and Lake streets in 1866. The building was of brick, five stories high, and contained 260 guest rooms, some of them suites. Lincoln and Douglas began their contest for senator on one of its balconies.

160 feet on Lake. When this, too, burned in 1849 they built a five-story brick replacement of two hundred and sixty rooms, which they vowed to make the finest hotel west of New York City. The new hostelry was so elaborately furnished (linen sheets on every bed, no less) that Chicagoans of the day called it "Couch's Folly." They changed their tune after it had been open a few weeks with all rooms filled every night, and guests often sleeping in the hallways.

Meanwhile Chicago was growing at a pace faster than any other city in the nation. Ira left the operation of the hotel pretty much to big brother James, who had a great flair for pleasing the public, and devoted his time to buying land in what is now the Loop and improving it with buildings containing offices and stores. Between them they were acquiring reputations as substantial citizens. Both were handsome men, generally grave of demeanor. James was heavy and square-built, with smooth-shaven upper lip and luxuriant, bushy, frequently trimmed chin whiskers which did not descend much below his Adam's apple. Ira was somewhat of a dandy, usually wearing a black broadcloth suit, white linen shirt, frilled vest and a black stock with bow neckpiece. His face was clean-shaven until the last few years of his life, when he grew a short, bristly beard along the lower jaw and chin. Ira and Caroline had two children, Ira Jr., who died in infancy, and Caroline, who outlived her Uncle James and her parents. James fathered a boy and a girl. In his case it was the daughter who died as a toddler and the son, Ira, who carried on the Couch name.

Through the middle years of the century the Couch family continued to prosper. Ira devoted his time to the development of real estate and in the process became one of Chicago's wealthier citizens. James managed the hotel so skillfully it became famous far beyond Chicago and Illinois for its appointments, service, cuisine, and cellars. His life was full, deep, and serene. The reaction of the brothers to recurrent epidemics which had taken the lives of close friends was to "just in case" purchase a plot of considerable size in the city cemetery. That "just in case" came to pass on January 28, 1857, when Ira Couch, on a visit to Havana, which he and his wife had determined to make an annual event, died unexpectedly after a brief illness. His wealth probably was exceeded in Chicago only by William B. Ogden and "Long John" Wentworth. His will, dated November 12, 1855 and probated March 16, 1857, disposed of an estate of more than a million dollars.

Except for minor bequests of less than a thousand dollars each, Ira's entire holdings were left in trust, one-fourth each to his wife, his daughter, his brother James, and his nephew Ira. Executors were the widow, brother James, and brother-in-law William H. Wood. Shortly after, Ira's brother James ordered the Couch crypt to be built. The site, of course, was the city cemetery, sometimes called the Protestant cemetery, which had been established in 1842 in a vacant area north and east of North Avenue and Clark Street. The mausoleum was a fitting monument to a man of Ira's substance. In describing it after construction was completed the *Tribune*, on August 14, 1858, said it was built of 100 tons of Lockport, New York, stone and had room for

eleven bodies set in a semicircle in niches in the walls. The cost was estimated at $7,000. The vault cover was sixteen feet long, seven feet wide, a foot thick at the edges and sixteen inches at the center. Eight horses, said the *Tribune*, had been required to move it from the dock out along Dearborn Street to the city cemetery. At the time of its construction it was said to be the most expensive tomb in the cemetery, and its severely classical lines and lack of ornamentation gave it an enduring beauty in accord with the "classic revival" that was sweeping the country. The crypt was surrounded by a wrought iron fence four feet high, with posts of equal height and a handsome gate at the north end. Sometime between 1902 and 1918 the fence was destroyed, leaving the tomb unprotected and a prey to vandals. A steel mesh enclosure replaced it, and the broken bottles that littered the area were removed.

The Couch crypt was the last mausoleum to be built in what is now Lincoln Park. Already, extensive propaganda to stop interments within the city limits had begun. Early in this campaign Dr. William Barry, secretary of the Chicago Historical Society, had called a meeting to hear a paper by Dr. John Raush on "intramural interments" and their influence on health and epidemics. Much of his theory has since been disproved, but it had considerable bearing on this much-discussed controversy. Edward S. Taylor, for many years secretary of the Board of Lincoln Park Commissioners, in his lengthy report of 1892 quotes Dr. Raush's ringing call for action as follows:

"Let immediate steps be taken to prevent all interments within the corporate limits, and, as

The Couch mausoleum in Lincoln Park, before its wrought iron fence was taken down.

Chicago Historical Society

A map of Chicago in 1865. The Chicago cemetery extended to the city's northern limit at Fullerton Avenue. Below it was the Catholic cemetery, which also no longer exists. A thousand Confederate soldiers who had died in Chicago prisons were buried in the Chicago cemetery by 1869; their bodies were the first removed when the land was reclaimed.
Chicago Historical Society

soon as practicable, let arrangements be made for the gradual removal, at proper times and seasons, of the remains of those already interred, with the ultimate view of converting these grounds into a public park, which will contribute to the health, pleasure and credit of our city."

This call to action was taken up by others, and on March 20, 1859, the common council passed a resolution forbidding any further sale of cemetery lots, but not interments on lots already sold. Mr. Taylor tells how this action came about:

In the fall of 1858 a petition was presented to the Common Council, signed by a number of residents and property owners of North Chicago, remonstrating against further interments in the cemetery. This petition was referred to a special committee which reported, recommending the adoption of an ordinance authorizing a conference with managers of Rose Hill cemetery with reference to interment of those whom the city should be advised to bury, and directing that the sale of lots in the city cemetery should cease May 1, 1859.

Definitely there would be no extension of the burial ground. What, then, was to become of the undivided land between Menomonee and Asylum Place, called by a noted lawyer and member of Congress, Isaac N. Arnold, "The Sandhills of the Lake Shore," or of the Ten Mile Ditch, dug only a year or two earlier to drain the swamps and bogs that lay close to the lake between Evanston and the Chicago River? The citizenry had a plan on which Mr. Taylor reported:

On the tenth of January, 1860, a committee representing the citizens of North Chicago presented a paper to the Common Council, in which they used the following language:

"We propose the abandonment of this tract, the north sixty acres, to the city of Chicago, to be used for a public ground and such other public purposes, if any, as the Common Council may devote it to. We would not advise its sale; such a step, we believe, would be unwise."

To this Mr. Arnold added his support. In an interview he asked: "Why not a public park?"

A decision was delayed while the people of Chicago turned their attention to battlefields of a more serious nature, but on March 14, 1864, thirteen months before the close of the Civil War, the common council accepted a resolution proposed by Councilman Armstrong, and referred it to the Committee on Wharves and Common Grounds, confirming the earlier ban on the sale of burial lots and creating a public park which would be called Lake Park. On October 21, 1864, the resolution was passed. On March 9, 1867, because Chicago already had a Lake Park (later to be called Grant Park), the former city cemetery was named for President Abraham Lincoln. On February 8, 1869, the Illinois General Assembly vested authority over Lincoln Park in a board of Lincoln Park Commissioners who served without pay. Immediately condemnation began which resulted in the purchase by the city of almost all of the burial plots and the removal of the bodies to Rosehill, Graceland, Oakwood, and Calvary cemeteries, all of which at the time lay beyond the limits of the city of Chicago. Cost of developing the park was to be met by a special tax levied only on the areas the new pleasure ground would serve. These included all of the area formerly called North Chicago from the river to Fullerton Avenue and that part of the incorporated town of Lakewood between Fullerton and Diversey, which would not become a part of Chicago until 1889.

After the creation of Lincoln Park it was the intent of the Board of Lincoln Park Commissioners to have all bodies removed from park land at the earliest possible date. However, the basic legislation creating the park made acquisition of the land not owned by the city permissive and not mandatory (Sec. 2 reads "Title . . . may be acquired," not "shall be").

The legend that neither purchase nor condemnation of the Couch plot had been completed because of a decision of the U.S. Supreme Court or some other court probably arose within the family. The fact is that the very detailed "Proceedings" of the Board of Lincoln Park Commissioners, preserved in manuscript in the library of the Chicago Park District, while they cover every unusual proceeding in the acquisition of land, contain no mention of any offer to purchase the Couch burial plot, nor any condemnation or other legal proceedings instituted against a member of the Couch family. Nor is there any indication of a court contest of any kind involving the tomb.

In my search for a clue as to why the crypt remains in Lincoln Park I read the "Proceedings" from 1869, when the Board of Lincoln Park Commissioners was created, to 1892, when James Couch perished. I also consulted case records of Illinois circuit courts, Cook County courts, the Illinois courts of appeal, the Illinois Supreme Court and the United States Supreme Court. In this I was greatly aided by Victor de Clerque of the Cook County Law Library and by the clerks of the various Illinois courts. Members of the Couch family appeared in two cases adjudicated by the Supreme Court of the United States, one relating to provisions of Ira Couch's will and the other to matters pertaining to leasing of the Tremont House and ownership of the furnishings. Both were submitted in 1889 and decided early in 1891. Neither had any bearing on the Couch mausoleum.

The removal of bodies from Lincoln Park continued for more than thirty years. The final transaction was the purchase, after prolonged negotiations, of the Peacock vault and lot, across Stockton Drive from the Couch crypt, for $1,000 on May 6, 1895.

James Couch was not destined to rest in the grave he had prepared for himself nearly half a century before his death. He was fatally injured by a dray on February 10, 1892, when he slipped while attempting to board a street car. Badly crushed by a wheel of the wagon, he was taken to the Tremont House and died there before midnight. He was buried at Rosehill because interment in Lincoln Park was by then against the law. Eight years later I. J. Bryan, secretary of the Lincoln Park Commission, in his "History of Lincoln Park," had this to say:

"There still remains in the southwestern corner of the park a conspicuous monument of the former uses to which the land was put, the old Couch burial vault. It was found that, because of the nature of its construction, it would be impossible to remove the vault except at very great expense, and the commissioners preferred to allow it to remain as a not uninteresting reminder of the park's origin."

I like to think that the agreement to let the Couch tomb remain in Lincoln Park was arrived at between James Couch and a member of the Board of Lincoln Park Commissioners over a friendly meal in the dining room of the Tremont House or a drink at the bar, but we will never know. All that we can be sure of is that there is no written record of the transaction or any controversy over the mausoleum in any court of the county, state, or nation. No money was paid to the Couch family, not even the customary "one dollar and other valuable considerations." Perhaps it was just an understanding between two gentlemen.

American Indian Peace Medals

BY FRANCIS PAUL PRUCHA

An instrument of American policy toward the Indians until the early 19th century, the ever-changing peace medal has become one of the numismatist's most prized items. Many were buried with the chiefs upon whom they were bestowed.

IN DEALING WITH THE ABORIGINES of the New World, the French, Spanish, and British presented silver medals to Indian leaders as marks of loyalty, symbols of friendship, and awards of merit. Indian chieftains proudly wore these handsomely crafted gifts of precious metal because the medals signified status and a special association with statesmen in distant lands. Following the War of Independence the newly formed United States continued the custom. In the early decades of the nation's existence, the ceremony at which Indian leaders turned in a British medal and received an American one in return signified the acceptance of American friendship and authority in place of that of the British.

Without medals to present, the United States government would have been at a disadvantage with the Indians. In 1829, as Americans pressed westward, Thomas L. McKenney, the head of the Indian Office, noted:

> So important is [the practice] . . . esteemed to be, that without Medals, any plan of operations among Indians, be it what it may, is essentially enfeebled. This comes of the high value which the Indians set upon these tokens of Friendship. They are, besides the indication of Government Friendship, badges of power to them, and trophies of renown. They will not consent to part from this ancient *right*, as they esteem it; and according to the value they set upon medals is the importance to the Government in having them to bestow.

Professor Prucha teaches at Marquette University. His interest in peace medals is an outgrowth of his specialization in American policy toward the Indians.

Although each presidential administration struck a new medal for presentation to Indian chiefs and warriors, the designs consistently reflected two themes of American Indian policy until the end of the nineteenth century. Granted that the United States eagerly sought to remove the Indians from their lands and to acquire the rich acres for white settlers, certain idealistic currents were also present. One was the desire to maintain peaceful relations with the Indian tribes, a concern which, though time and time again overshadowed by military operations against hostile Indians, never disappeared. The second was the idea of "civilizing" the Indians, to lead them away from their "barbarous" ways to the "civilized," Christian ways of the whites. Much concern was directed toward changing the Indian from a primitive hunter into a settled farmer.

It was fitting, therefore, that the medals should show not only symbols of the American government but symbols as well of peace, friendship, and civilization. Officials concerned with the designing and production of the American medals intended that they carry these unmistakable messages.

The first United States Indian peace medals, dated 1789, were oval sheets of silver with crudely engraved designs. The obverse shows the standing figure of an Indian chief, with feathered headdress and draped blanket, dropping his tomahawk from his right hand. With his left hand he is accepting a peace pipe from a female figure dressed as Minerva, with helmet, coat of mail, and a short sword, representing America. On the ground at her feet are a spear and an oval shield

decorated with a Medusa head. The symbolism of the Indian casting away his tomahawk and accepting the peace pipe could hardly be missed. In the background is a plow, hinting at a new life for the Indian. The reverse bears the arms of the United States: an eagle with extended wings, a shield on its breast with thirteen stripes, an olive branch in the right talon and thirteen arrows in the left. The head is encircled with thirteen stars, with clouds and rays. The obverse has the wording G. WASHINGTON PRESIDENT; the reverse, THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

Medals given to the Indians in subsequent years of Washington's administration—in considerable numbers and in three sizes—bore designs which built on this first medal but which had important changes. Minerva has been replaced by the figure of Washington in a general's uniform with a sword at his side. Medals of this design carry the dates 1792, 1793, and 1795. The acceptance of peace by the Indian from the United States is strikingly presented, but a story circulating in Washington's time recounted that one western Indian chief asked, "Why does not the President bury his sword also?"

Indian medals designed for Washington's second term were of quite a different character and stressed scenes of agricultural and domestic life, rather than symbols of peace and friendship. They were designed by the American artist John Trumbull and were struck in England. The artist gave his own description of the medals.

> No. 1 alludes to the raising of cattle—a cow licking a young calf—sheep and a lamb sucking—a man in the character of a shepherd watching them—a small house and trees in the distance.
>
> No. 2—A man sowing wheat—in the distance another person ploughing—a small house and inclosures—characterize the first steps in agriculture.
>
> No. 3—The inside of a house—a woman spinning—another weaving—an infant in the cradle rocked by another child somewhat larger—is meant to convey an idea of domestic tranquility and employment.

Such pictures were intended to lead the Indians toward the customs of civilized life, which President Washington had much in mind. The medals are traditionally known as the season medals, although the designs do not depict strictly seasonal scenes. The reverse on each of the medals was the same: an inscription, SECOND PRESIDENCY OF GEO. WASHINGTON MDCCXCVI, surrounded by a wreath of oak and olive leaves.

The next medals for presentation to the Indians were struck during Thomas Jefferson's administration. Unlike either the engraved oval medals of Washington or the season medals, they instead show the influence of the British medals, with which the American medals came into serious competition on the northwest frontier. They are round, struck in three sizes, and on the obverse show a profile bust of Jefferson, with the inscription, TH. JEFFERSON PRESIDENT OF THE U.S. A.D. 1801, in imitation of the bust of George III on the British medals. It is possible that Jefferson, less in danger than Washington of attack for emphasizing the person or office of the chief executive, could afford to authorize medals with his own portrait. It seems clear, moreover, that the Indians reacted favorably to the representation of the Great Father, for all succeeding American peace medals bore on the obverse the portrait of the President. New medals were struck for each President from Jefferson to Benjamin Harrison, excepting William Henry Harrison, who served only one month before his death.

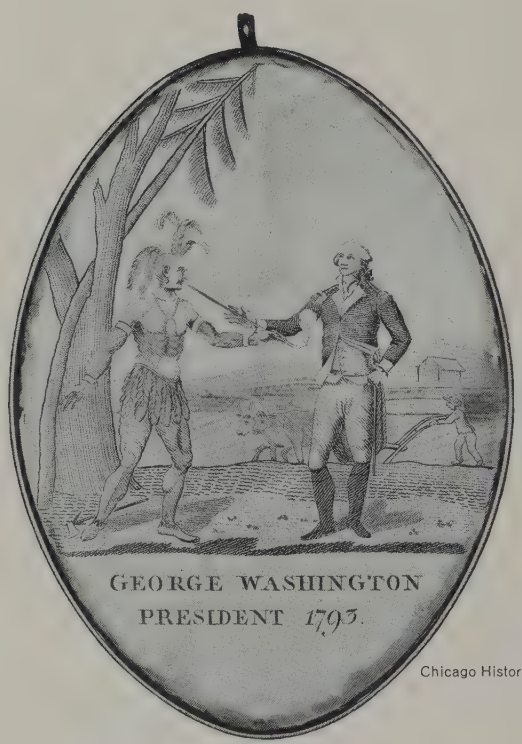
The reverse on the Jefferson medals established the design that, with slight changes, was used for the medals through Zachary Taylor. It is simple and effective. At the top are a crossed peacepipe and tomahawk, a symbol of peace. In the center are hands clasped in friendship. The one at the left shows a braided cuff of a military uniform; the one on the right is adorned with a silver wrist band engraved with the spread eagle of the United States. In large letters appears the inscription PEACE AND FRIENDSHIP.

The Madison medals designed by a German die sinker who emigrated to America, John Reich, are similar in design, but a change was introduced on the reverse. The new pattern was used until Millard Fillmore. During these decades

Courtesy American Numismatic Society

Washington Peace Medal 1789 (obverse). 106 x 137 mm.

Washington Peace Medal 1789 (reverse).



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Washington Peace Medal 1793 (obverse). The background has a more fully developed scene of agricultural life, with trees at the left, a man with a yoke of oxen plowing in the center, and a house at the far right. 128 x 174 mm.

Washington Peace Medal 1793 (reverse). Note the addition of a ribbon in the eagle's beak bearing the motto E PLURIBUS UNUM. One of the three peace medals from the Gunther Collection.

Courtesy American Numismatic Society

Fillmore Medal (reverse). 76 mm.

Courtesy American Numismatic Society

Jefferson Medal (obverse). 105 mm.

Jefferson Medal (reverse).

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British Loyalty Medal 1815 (obverse). Profile bust portrait of George III in armor and GEORGIUS DEI GRATIA. Given to Chief Blackbird, who led the Pottawatomi and Ottawas against Fort Dearborn. 79 mm.

British Loyalty Medal 1815 (reverse). British coat of arms (lion, unicorn, shield, and crown), and HONI SOIT QUI MAL Y PENSE and DIEU ET MON DROIT.

Courtesy American Numismatic Society

Madison Medal 1809 (reverse). Only one of the clasped hands is encuffed, while the other is left bare, thus more clearly indicating the diversity of the races united in friendship. 76 mm.

Courtesy American Numismatic Society

Buchanan Medal (reverse). At the top is a gruesome scene of one Indian in the act of scalping another. At the bottom is the hand of an Indian woman, with a tomahawk and bow at the right and a quiver of arrows at the left. In the center is a medallion showing an Indian plowing in the foreground, with children playing ball beyond him. In the background at the left is a frame house and at the right a steepled church. Between them stretches out a large lake or sea with the masts of sailing vessels showing at one edge and a sidewheeler steamboat in the center. 76 mm.

Courtesy American Numismatic Society

Jackson Medal (reverse). William P. Dole, the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, dictated the design:

Reverse containing in the center an alter [sic] on top of which rests the bust of Washington; on the left the figure of an Indian with bow and arrow and other Indian insignia—and in the background buffalo hunting; on the right a figure representing America shaking hands with the Indian—surrounded with flags; in the background a railroad with engine and a train of cars—instruments of agriculture and machinery covering the foreground—showing the advance of civilization—on the front of the altar the word *Peace* encircled with myrtle. 76 mm.

matters of peace were paramount in American dealings with the Indians.

The reverse of the Fillmore medal was engraved by a young New York artist named Joseph Willson. Gone are the traditional clasped hands and the PEACE AND FRIENDSHIP inscription. In their place Willson shows an Indian in feathered headdress and blanket, facing a white man in civilian clothes. An American flag forms a backdrop. The civilized pursuits of the white man are symbolized by an ax and a plow between the two men. In the background behind the Indian is a grove of trees with an Indian tepee; behind the white man a peaceful scene of hills, domestic cattle, enclosed fields, a farm house, and a lake with sailboat. At the top are three links of a chain enclosing the words LABOR, VIRTUE, HONOR. The beautiful simplicity of the earlier medals is gone. In striving to present a message of peace and friendship with emphasis on the diverse situation of the Indian and the white Americans, to indicate the advantage of one over the other, the artist cluttered his design and perhaps obscured the meaning. The Fillmore design was used again on the Franklin Pierce medals and on many of the bronze restrikes of the James Buchanan medals.

The reverse of the silver Buchanan medals presented to the Indians was another production of Joseph Willson, in which he outdid his previous effort. In a wide border encircling the medal the artist presented scenes and symbols of savage life. A medal smaller than the one shown has minor changes, but the message is the same: the advantages of civilization over the life of the savage. There was one incongruity, however, which the government officials in viewing a preliminary impression of the medal quickly spotted. The plowing Indian, although dressed in white man's clothes and surrounded by elements of white civilization, was still wearing a full feathered headdress. The President and Secretary of the Interior decided that the design would be more acceptable if the Indian's headdress could be removed, and they asked the artist to do so if

he could without injury to the die. But once the design had been cut, there was no way to remove the offending remnant of Indian culture. Nor would the message have been quite so clear, for there would have been no way to make it obvious that the man was an Indian who had been converted to an agricultural life. The same reverses were repeated on the Lincoln medals.

The Indian medals bearing the likeness of Andrew Jackson on the obverse were designed and the dies cut by Anthony C. Paquet, who was told just what to do by Commissioner of Indian Affairs William P. Dole. He dutifully followed orders, and a conglomeration of symbols appeared crowded into the design on the finished medals.

The peace medals of President Grant continued the movement toward complicated designs filled with symbolic devices and pertinent inscriptions. So full were both sides of this medal that there was no room at all for the President's name. Anthony C. Paquet, who was engaged again to cut the dies, signed a contract with the Indian Office originally "for medals for Indian chiefs, to contain on the obverse a Roman bust in profile of the present President of the United States, and on the reverse the full view of the U. S. Capitol." He had, in fact, made considerable progress on the dies when he was suddenly jolted by a message from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs: "As the President's Cabinet have adopted a new design for the Indian Medal, you will please suspend work on the dies for the medals ordered under your contract with this office, until further advised on the subject. The profile of the President will probably be retained on the new medal, but the reverse will be entirely different."

Undoubtedly, for an administration whose "Peace Policy" was a notable attempt to solve the problem of Indian relations, a view of the Capitol was inappropriate. We can imagine Grant and his cabinet proceeding with a will to revise the design; it almost seems as though each one added some favorite symbol of his own to the final design. Paquet must have been an obliging sort of artist, for the medals could hardly have seemed artistic to him, however rich their message of peace. The obverse, in addition to a profile of Grant, shows a peace pipe and a sprig of olive, a border of olive leaves broken four times by small United States shields, and the inscriptions UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, LET US HAVE PEACE and LIBERTY JUSTICE AND EQUALITY. The reverse depicts a globe showing the western hemisphere, with the Atlantic and Pacific oceans labeled, an open Bible, and on a grassy plot with a tree stump an assortment of agricultural implements including a rake, hoes, shovels, and a plow. It has the inscription ON EARTH PEACE GOOD WILL TOWARD MEN and the date 1871. There is a border of thirty-six stars, one for each state.

The Indian peace medals from Hayes through Cleveland were oval instead of round, and the reverse returned to a scene showing the introduction of the Indian to white civilization. The design was the work of George T. Morgan, an engraver at the United States Mint. The Secretary of the Interior, H. L. Muldrow, suggested in 1885, when the medals were planned, that the reverse show "something allegorical suggestive of the present condition of the Indian race." Apparently the reverse already in use answered well enough, for no change was made.

The last of the series was a round medal designed during the administration of Benjamin Harrison. Special attention was paid to this medal and its message. Its production came about through the initiative of a group of Indians who visited Washington in 1890 and asked for round medals rather than the oval ones produced since 1877. To meet their request the Indian Office prepared a rough design, which was forwarded to the mint with the following statement: "The designs hitherto used for the reverse of the medal do not appropriately represent the present status of the Indian, and in the enclosed rough design an attempt is made to give the idea that he has abandoned his tepee and has adopted a civilized house and occupa-

Courtesy American Numismatic Society

Hayes Medal (reverse). The center shows a pioneer farmer conversing with an Indian in native costume under an oak tree. The farmer holds an ax and stands near a tree he has felled. In the background, a log cabin, in front of which sits a woman with a child on her lap and a dog at her feet. Nearby, a man plowing. Above the scene, the word PEACE, the letters separated by rays and the date 1877 below it. Below the scene, crossed tomahawk and peacepipe entwined with a wreath. 60 x 76 mm.

Benjamin Harrison Medal (reverse). Above the two medallions appears the traditional crossed peacepipe and tomahawk and the word PEACE, all intertwined by a wreath and sprays of olive or laurel. Below the medallion are a banner inscribed PROGRESS, another plow, and on each side more olive branches. 76 mm.

tion." The sketch showed an Indian dressed in white man's clothes, his right hand on a plow and his left holding the reins of a horse. In the right background was a tepee in the process of being dismantled; in the left background appeared a frame farm house with a farm wagon beside it and beyond a fenced field of cultivated grain—to represent the new Indian, who had left his native ways and had adopted those of the whites.

The engraver at the mint, Charles E. Barber, modified the design by substituting a schoolhouse where the tepee had been and adding an olive branch as an emblem of peace, and he sent a plaster model of the reverse to the Indian Office for comment. The Commissioner of Indian Affairs was generally satisfied, but he had "two unimportant suggestions to make," which stressed the message to be conveyed by the medal:

> If practicable, and not inartistic, I should like to have a child introduced in the design, and placed in front of the house. If his position could be such as to indicate that the child is on his way to school, so much the better; but I doubt the practicability of this.
>
> If the hand on the plow is made a little smaller, and if the face of the man can be given more distinctively Indian features, I think the design will be improved. Otherwise I have no other modification to suggest.

The Secretary of the Interior was less satisfied. "I am not able to say that this work of art strikes me at all favorably," he said. "Where is the necessity of stretching the plow, the Indian and

the horse in a string across the face of the medal, why are they all placed at the front of the house?" But he did think "the idea about the school children a very good one."

The engraver solved the problem by providing a modified design for the reverse. He used two overlapping medallions, one showing an Indian in native costume standing in front of a tepee, the adaptation originally suggested. The Indian now holds a shovel in one hand and leads a horse with the other. There are chickens and a plow in the near background, beyond them the frame house with wagon, and in the distance a school house and other buildings. There was no room, apparently, to show the child on his way to school.

This final medal was an appropriate climax to the century of peace medal iconography. The peace motif by 1890 was a traditional carry-over from earlier days and the symbols were subordinate to the greater theme of the progress of the Indian from his primitive native ways to the full acceptance of the civilization desired for him by white reformers. The farm had replaced the chase, the frame dwelling the tepee, and white clothes the native costume; and the schoolhouse was the reminder that education made the transition possible.

The Indian peace medals have great numismatic interest. Government officials quickly realized the national significance of the medals, forming as they did a "presidential" series, and when the need for such medals weakened and then disappeared altogether, inaugural medals, bearing portraits of the presidents, carried on the series. The Indian medals have become great collectors' items. Distinguished collections have been assembled, notably by the American Numismatic Society in New York and the Smithsonian Institution in Washington. Many are prized possessions of private collectors, who value both their artistic and their historic value. The medals presented to the Indians, of course, are rare and extremely valuable. Although some of the early ones were produced in considerable numbers—about three hundred Jackson medals were made, for example— many were buried with the Indians who received them or have otherwise disappeared. Bronze copies of the peace medals from Jefferson on, however, are available from the United States Mint in Philadelphia at a nominal cost.

For further reference. A full history of the use of peace medals in American Indian policy and of the production of the medals, with exhaustive documentation, can be found in the author's book, *Indian Peace Medals in American History* (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1971).

NORTH AVENUE VIGNETTES

Joe the Barber

BY PAUL M. ANGLE

Another in a series of short articles on the changing neighborhood of which the Chicago Historical Society is a part.

FOR MANY YEARS I had my hair cut by Joe the Barber. He was Sicilian born and I think his last name was Maccione, but no matter: everyone knew him only as Joe. His shop, when I first began to patronize him, stood on the north side of North Avenue two or three doors west of Clark Street. At that time he had three chairs but only one other barber, a middle-aged man with red hair who was a trial. Every day, by late afternoon, he would be unmistakably tipsy. Joe knew he had a bottle hidden somewhere around the shop but search as he would, he couldn't find it. One day the toilet in the back room refused to work. Joe lifted the lid of the water tank. There was his barber's bottle. Deprived of his tipple, the barber soon quit, and thereafter Joe took care of his patrons himself.

Except for Paul, Joe's porter and shoe-shine boy. Paul was a small Negro with a large pot belly, a beatific smile, and the sunniest disposition any human being was ever endowed with. But Paul had two passions which made him somewhat unstable. One was whiskey. As the day wore on and Paul accumulated shine money he would slip across North Avenue to the Country Club, a notorious saloon and horse parlor, and linger for an hour or two over a couple of shots. On those rare days when he took in enough cash to buy a fifth, forty-eight hours would pass before he would show up. On his return, Joe would give him a merciless and highly profane dressing down which Paul would take with a bashful smile and an occasional plaintive remark like, "Now, Mister Joe, I ain't that bad." No matter how frequent Paul's absences, Joe always took him back. I am convinced he loved the little Negro dearly.

Paul's other passion was betting on the races. This predeliction led me into a near-miss with the law. I was in Joe's shop early one Saturday afternoon when Paul said:

"Mister Angle, I got a horse that's sure gonna win in the third race at Belmont."

"Why don't you bet him?"

"I ain't got the money."

"All right," I said. "Here's two dollars. If the horse loses it's all mine; if it wins we split fifty-fifty. Okay?"

Paul hustled across the street to the Country Club. When he returned Joe was just finishing with me.

"Want to go over and hear that race?" Paul asked. "It'll be on the radio in a few minutes."

Over we went, through the bar and into a large room at the back. There thirty-five or forty people, men and women, were studying form sheets, watching the odds go up on blackboards, and listening to races on the radio. Our race came on, and of course our horse finished out of the money. Paul returned to work and I went home.

That was about 2:30. The next morning I read in the paper that at 3:00 on Saturday the police had raided the Country Club, found betting in progress, and hauled everybody in the back room to the Hudson Avenue station. To this day I am grateful to Paul for picking the third race instead of the fifth or sixth.

In due time the corner of North and Clark fell to progress in the form of the same building and loan association that had displaced the Blue Danube. Joe found a nearby location on the west side of North Clark a few doors south of North Avenue. Here, late one afternoon, I sat in his chair. Not ordinarily loquacious, Joe began to talk about television and the programs he watched regularly. Because I could make no comments, I finally had to admit that I had no

Courtesy Paul M. Angle

Joe the Barber in front of his Clark Street shop in 1957.

television set. Joe said nothing for several minutes. Then he spoke:

"Mister Angle, I donna understand. I don' know how mucha money you make, but it's sure a hell of a lot more than a poor barber. You comea in here this afternoon wearin' two, three hundred dollars' worth a clothes. Last year you go to Europe, now you've just comea back from Mexico."

Then his voice rose almost to a shout:

"Why the hell you no have television?"

In this shop the funniest of all encounters between Joe and Paul took place. I appeared late one Saturday morning to find Paul being excoriated with more than usual vehemence. I soon had the story. The night before, just at closing time, one of the day's patrons telephoned to ask about a package, a brown paper bag, he thought he had left there. Joe looked around: no bag was in evidence. What was in it? he asked. A bottle of whiskey. Just then Joe saw Paul quietly slipping out the door.

"Paul, you son-of-a-bitch, come back here!"

Paul returned and sheepishly surrendered the paper sack. Five seconds more and he would have made it.

By the time I arrived Joe's denunciations had been going on for two hours, and Paul had had enough. At the first pause he asked, quietly and courteously:

"Mister Joe, didn't you ever make a social error?"

Even Joe had to laugh.

One day I found Joe sad and conscience-stricken. Barney, of Barney's Market Club, was an old friend whom he had seen a few days earlier for the first time in years. Barney was prosperous, and obviously enjoying that benign state.

"Barney," Joe had said, "you're making so damn much money you should drop dead!"

"How could I know," Joe asked me, "that that was what was gonna happen to him in two or three days? You think, Mr. Angle, that maybe I put some kind of curse on him?"

Not long afterward Joe went the same way. I haven't seen Paul since.

Fifty Years Ago

As recorded by newspapers in the collection of the Chicago Historical Society

Chicago Historical Society

Chick Evans. The putt he has just made was short of the hole, but see July 1.

1922

July 1. In Kansas City, Chick Evans, of the Edgewater Golf Club, wins the Western Amateur golf championship for the seventh time.

July 4. The Fourth of July toll: five drowned, one dead and a dozen hurt in auto crashes, and one injured by fireworks. There are 200 fire alarms, mostly false.

July 10. Employees of the Chicago Surface Lines vote overwhelmingly to strike if their demands for a pay increase are not met. They defer action, however, until elevated employees vote on July 13.

July 13. Elevated employees vote to strike, 4,279 to 14.

July 22. Herman Paepcke, founder and chairman of the board of the Chicago Mill and Lumber Company, dies at seventy-one.

July 26. William Quinlan, president of the Chicago Surface Lines employees' union, warns the city to prepare for a strike on the morning of August 1.

July 30. The *Tribune* reports that "Ma" Streeter, widow of "Captain" George Wellington Streeter, who in his lifetime claimed suzerainty over the District of Lake Michigan, has anchored a houseboat near the Municipal Pier and is doing a flourishing business in hot dogs and other eatables.

Aug. 1. Twenty thousand street car and elevated employees go on strike at 4:00 A.M. Many employers send trucks for workers.

Aug. 5. The traction strike ends. Service will be resumed on August 7. The men accept a pay cut, but gain all demands as to working conditions.

Aug. 6. An "ideal" section of the Lincoln Highway, under construction in Lake County, Indiana, will cost $100,000 a mile.

Aug. 7. John G. Shedd, president of Marshall Field & Company, celebrates fifty years of service with that firm by giving a party at his Lake Forest home to thirty-three men who have also served fifty years or more.

Aug. 9. Announcement is made that a second Wrigley Building, twin to the first, will be built north of the original structure. Cost is estimated at $3,000,000.

Aug. 14. Levy Mayer, noted Chicago lawyer, dies in his suite at the Blackstone Hotel. He is reputed to have been the wealthiest lawyer in the city. Born in Richmond, Virginia, in 1858, Mayer had lived in Chicago since he was a young man.

Aug. 17. Prof. Roy C. Flickinger, dean of the College of Liberal Arts at Northwestern, states that the university will hire no more married instructors unless they have independent incomes. An instructor simply cannot support a family on the average salary of $35 or $40 a week.

Aug. 19. Twenty-five thousand knights of the Ku Klux Klan see the nation's largest class of new Klansmen—4,650—initiated in a huge field southwest of Chicago.

Aug. 21. The Winnetka home of Mr. and Mrs. William B. McIlvaine is burglarized, set afire, and almost completely destroyed.

Aug. 22. A strike in the Illinois coal fields, called April 1, comes to an end.

Aug. 27. Francis S. Peabody, millionaire coal dealer and power in the Democratic party, dies of a heart attack in the first hunt of the season on his estate at Hinsdale. He was seventy-three.

Sept. 5. Samuel Fallows, bishop and head of the Reformed Episcopal Church, dies at eighty-seven. He had served his church in Chicago since 1875.

Sept. 13. A crippling strike on the nation's railroads, begun July 1, is settled. The men return to work for the same pay they received on June 30.

Sept. 14. Work will begin immediately on a new zoo to be located at Brookfield on land donated by Mrs. Edith Rockefeller McCormick. John T. McCutcheon, president of the Chicago Zoological Society, makes the announcement.

Sept. 20. Samuel Insull is feted at a dinner commemorating thirty years of service with Commonwealth Edison Company.

Traffic jam on Michigan Avenue,
in front of the Art Institute,
during the street car strike of 1922. See August 1.

Chicago Historical Society

Cub fans cheering on a winning team during the 1922 season. If 10,000 seats were added, would the customers sit down? See November 8.

Chicago Historical Society

Chicago Historical Society

"The Fountain of Time." See November 15.

Sept. 26. Charles H. Wacker, chairman of the Chicago Plan Commission, speaks before the West Side Commercial League at a dinner celebrating the destruction of 500 houses to make way for the extension of Ogden Avenue from Union Park to Lincoln Park.

Oct. 1. The Most Reverend George W. Mundelein, Archbishop of Chicago, dedicates Rosary College, a new Roman Catholic school for girls at River Forest.

Oct. 2. Arthur Burrage Farwell, for forty years a fighter against liquor and vice, is honored with a testimonial dinner on his seventieth birthday.

Oct. 3. John P. Wilson, lawyer and civic leader, dies at seventy-eight in a hospital at Lake Forest.

Levy Mayer's will divides his $8,000,000 estate between his widow and two daughters. Bequests to charity total $100,000.

Oct. 4. The White Sox beat the Cubs, 6 to 2, in the first game of the city series.

Oct. 6. Ben Hecht, reporter, and Wallace Smith, illustrator, are named in federal warrants charging them with conspiracy to circulate obscene matter by means of common carriers. The charges stem from their book, *Fantazius Malare*, which the First Assistant District Attorney calls "one of the most filthy, inexcusable assortments of rubbish that has come to the attention of government officials in ten years."

Oct. 9. The Eugene Field memorial is unveiled in Lincoln Park. Two grandchildren of the poet unveil the statue.

Oct. 14. Douglas Fairbanks and his wife Mary Pickford visit Chicago to attend the world premiere of his latest picture, "Robin Hood."

Oct 15. After several days' delay because of rain the Cubs take the seventh and final game of the city series. This is the Cubs' first series victory since 1909.

Oct. 19. Four Chicago poets—Mrs. Arthur T. Aldis, Eunice Tietjens, Mrs. Howard Van Doren Shaw, and Carl Sandburg—read their own poems at a dinner for Harriet Monroe celebrating the tenth anniversary of the founding of *Poetry*.

Oct. 26. Officers of the Chicago Zoological Society break ground for the new Brookfield Zoo.

Oct. 28. In the most important game of the midwestern football season Princeton beats the University of Chicago, 21 to 18, at Stagg Field.

Nov. 1. The city council limits tag days to three a year. Sixty-two had been held in the first ten months of 1922.

Nov. 4. Work starts on a new Gold Coast hotel, the Pearson, at Pearson and Seneca streets.

The Union League Club reveals plans for a twenty-one-story building at Jackson Boulevard and Federal Street. Construction will begin next spring.

Nov. 7. In a state and local election the Democrats sweep most county offices. The result is interpreted as a rebuke to the Republican machine of "Big Bill" Thompson.

Nov. 8. The Cubs announce the enlargement of their North Side park. The playing field will be enlarged, and 10,000 seats will be added.

Chicago Historical Society

A tiger in Chicago; Georges Clemenceau (upper left) warned of danger abroad. See November 28.

Nov. 15. Lorado Taft's massive group of statuary, "The Fountain of Time," is formally presented to the South Park Board by Charles L. Hutchinson, president of the B. F. Ferguson Fund, which commissioned and paid for the work.

Nov. 18. Chicago defeats Illinois, 9 to 0, at Stagg Field.

Nov. 19. Frank Bacon, character actor and star of "Lightnin'," dies at the Del Prado Hotel.

Nov. 27. M. Georges Clemenceau, wartime premier of France, arrives in Chicago for a short visit. Gen. John J. Pershing heads the reception committee.

Nov. 28. Clemenceau, speaking to an overflow audience at the Auditorium, warns against a Russo-Turko-German alliance.

Dec. 2. John Mead Howells of New York City wins first prize in the competition for the *Tribune's* new building on North Michigan Avenue.

Dec. 3. Ceremonies mark the laying of the cornerstone of the London Guarantee and Accident Building, northwest corner of Michigan Avenue and River Street, now Wacker Drive.

Dec. 12. Illinois voters reject a new state constitution by a vote of five to one.

Dec. 16. An early morning fire destroys the Evanston Country Club. Loss is set at $75,000.

Dec. 21. The Dearborn Street rail station, once regarded as one of the world's finest, is destroyed by fire.

Dec. 24. Merchants estimate that Chicagoans spent $100,000,000, a record sum, during the Christmas season.

Dec. 31. Celebrants enjoy a "moist" New Year's Eve as prohibition agents generally ignore flask-carrying patrons of cafes.

Chicago Historical Society

The chairman of the Oakland Businessmen's Association poses with a still taken in a South Side raid in 1922. But see December 31.

A Lifetime in the Writing

BY HOKE NORRIS

FANNY BUTCHER has lived long enough to know two major wars and many small wars, the coming of the automobile, the airplane, radio, television, antibiotics, the atomic bomb and space travel, and the general acceptance of the theories of Freud and Darwin and the spread of Marxism across half the globe. In Chicago, she was here when the Little Theatre was here, and Dreiser, Lardner, Hecht, Sandburg and Margaret Anderson, and Capone too and Big Bill Thompson and other unsavories, and Colonel McCormick in his early days and Bernhardt in her last days and all the rest of us in our worst days and in our best days. Like Virgil she can say that some of this she was and all of it she saw.

She has now put all of it into her book, and a rich feast it turns out to be. Part of its richness arises from Miss Butcher's character. Her old friends can hear her voice in this book—soft, kind, quiet, warm, firm when firmness is needed (the style is the woman). Part of its richness arises from her skill and experience as a reporter. As a *Chicago Tribune* society writer, book critic and Jacqueline of all journalistic trades, she managed to be there when most of the history was made hereabouts over a period of five decades, and when some of the history was made elsewhere.

Fanny Butcher was born in Kansas but came with her family to Chicago when she was five, in order that her father might enter the Art Institute. She learned to read as naturally as she learned to breathe—she didn't need to *learn* it at all, she was born with it, apparently (and pedagogues who brood over the teaching of reading these days, or its lack and its failures, could study her case with profit). After college (University of Chicago) she tried teaching for part of a school year at Rolling Prairie High School (and this too the pedagogues might study, for there were school rowdies in those days too), and then gradually found herself getting into journalism. She joined the staff of the *Tribune* at $75 a month in 1913, and a career lay before her.

It was a career not without its frustrations. She wrote society, against her wishes but to the best of her ability, and when the *Tribune* instituted a book section, she wanted its editorship but it went, alas, to another. The colonel had said that *Tribune* readers did not read books, and the first editor of his book section was a former travel writer who boasted that he had not read a book since *Main Street*, and that was 20 years ago. She does not mention this learned gentleman's name. Miss Butcher is a very kind lady but her failure to get the editorship provokes the only bitter moment in the book.

For the rest of it, the compensations overwhelm the disappointments and the frustrations. Along the way she met most of the writers of her day, and has now presented them to us in delightful anecdotes, vignettes and in some cases extended essays. In brief space a reviewer can only indicate what is to be found in *Many Lives—One Love.** Here are some samplings:

Miss Butcher's first encounter with theatre occurred in Oklahoma when it was still Indian territory. She went to visit an aunt in Sapulpa, and so to see a production of *The Squaw Man:* "It wasn't long before one member of the audience got miffed over what was going on on the stage . . . With a champion's accuracy, he opened his mouth and sent a stream of tobacco juice straight at a candle (one of several lighting the stage). It sputtered for only a moment and went out. Before anyone knew what the shootin' was about, a champion spitting contest was in full swing, and footlights, bombarded by experts, were toppling." Her love of the theatre managed to survive this introduction.

"Theodore Dreiser was for a brief time closely associated with the Little Theatre. So far as women seemed to be concerned, he had as his slogan, like Pepys' diary, 'and so to bed'."

Hoke Norris, director of public information of the Chicago Public Library, has been a novelist, short-story writer, newspaperman, and book reviewer. When Fanny Butcher was literary editor of the *Chicago Tribune*, he was literary editor of the rival *Sun-Times*.

**Many Lives—One Love*, Fanny Butcher. Harper & Row, New York, 1972. $10.

Chicago Historical Society

Fanny Butcher and friends in Chicago in 1933. Seated are Mrs. and Mr. Carl Sandburg and Mrs. Julia Peterkin; standing are Mrs. Carl I. Hendrickson, Fanny Butcher, and Harriet Monroe, founder of *Poetry* magazine.

On the making of literary movements: "Ben Hecht and his first wife lived around the corner from me, with Lloyd Lewis across the street, and often Ben and Charlie MacArthur, while he was working on the *Chicago Tribune*, and Lloyd Lewis and Carl Sandburg would sit in my dormer-windowed attic study and talk—they would talk hilariously and I would listen—but I assure you the talk was never about any potential Chicago Renaissance. Ben's and Charlie's fantastically successful play *The Front Page* wasn't written until late in the twenties, and Carl Sandburg never mentioned Abraham Lincoln. . . . . We talked shop, the way plumbers or stamp collectors or actors talk about their special interests. We were certainly not crusaders bent on going down in history as members of a movement. . . ."

"When I asked Hervey Allen how long it took him to write *Anthony Adverse*, he said, 'All my life'. Oddly enough, I have had that same answer from countless writers. And it is a wise and honest, not a flip, one, for every really good book is in fact the sum total of the creator's life and thought, his human contacts, his association with great minds of the past in his reading. . . ."

"Everything about Harriet Monroe was so admirable that one thought of her with the highest respect, and what one felt must be affection for her life of devotion to a cause. But, and it is regrettable, when one was actually with dear Harriet she was just plain difficult to get along with, for inside her small, wiry, appealing frame were a heart and a mind as inflexible as a computer's. . . . Too close, she was prickly, but she was also curious, courageous, and indomitable, mentally and physically. . . ."

During a voyage to Europe on the *France:* ". . . We sat on deck to watch the sun come up, and I have never seen a sunrise anywhere that has dimmed the memory of that magical conquest of black night by the hosanna-singing sun. I have often got up at daybreak to look out of an east window (before progress took over on Chicago's lake front and built the high rises that cut off my view of Lake Michigan), hoping that watching the sun come out of the waters would give me again the moment of wonder and awe that that dawn at sea gave me. But, sadly, one can't be young and thrill prone forever."

Her view of Paris, from the top floor of the George V Hotel: ". . . a perfect vantage point as the sun sank and twilight turned both the luminous gray of the Paris buildings and the palpitant blue of the Paris sky to a tender, mysterious mauve. As we dined, solid Paris faded away, and below us there were only twinkling lights, making the life of the city seem remote, strange, tinseled, and gay."

Carl Sandburg: "In the half-century I knew him I never saw him buy anyone a drink or a lunch or take one perfect rose to a hostess. However, the hosts and hostesses to whom he 'proposed himself,' as the British say, expected and wanted only his presence. . . ."

On the end of Sinclair Lewis: "I never knew any man more capable of loving a woman, a career, or a world he wanted to make better for everyone than Sinclair Lewis when I first knew him, nor one who seemed, before he died, more like a shell one might find on a beach, empty of life, but echoing the sound of the sea in which it had once had its viable being if anyone took the trouble to listen."

There is no end to such passages, about Edna Ferber, Thornton Wilder, Fannie Hurst, Zona Gale, John Gunther, Robert Herrick, James Joyce—about the whole of the literary life since the turn of the century. But space runs out, like the hours and the years. There remains the book, which, like Hervey Allen's, was a lifetime in the writing.

All About Chicago's Swedes

BY VILAS JOHNSON

Chicago Historical Society

The employees of a Swedish tailoring shop come outside to pose for the photographer. From the book *Swedes in Chicago.*

MANY YEARS AGO, the head of a firm with which I was connected was offered the presidency of the Norwegian American Historical Association. Before accepting, he asked me to determine for him the historical value of the work of this organization. So I obtained an introduction to those eminent historians, Drs. Charles and Mary Beard, and called upon them in their delightful Morningside Heights home in New York City.

In reply to several questions, Dr. Beard told me that the definitive history of the United States could not be written until the various substantive ethnic

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Vilas Johnson, secretary of Chicago's Commercial Club, was a founder and first president of the Swedish Pioneer Historical Society, Inc. He still serves as a member of its board.

groups in this country had written their stories and had thoroughly researched and prepared sound appraisals of their contributions. Dr. Beard cited the work of the Norwegian American Historical Association under the leadership of the capable Dr. Theodore Blegen of the University of Minnesota and his highly skilled associates as a model for all ethnic groups to follow. This answered all my questions and later prompted me to take part in the founding of The Swedish Pioneer Historical Society in 1948.

The Norwegians have done a remarkable job in their field, and continue rolling on with vigor. It now appears that the Swedes are picking up speed and setting out to accomplish the goals set by Dr. Beard.

While there have been a vast number of noteworthy volumes published on Swedish contributions to the building of America by such authorities as Ander, Stephenson, Sten Carlsson, Bergendoff, Benson, Hedin, Hokanson, Janson, E. Gustav Johnson, Scott, Widen, and others, two recent publications have special merit and significant value. One is Dr. Nils William Olsson's monumental *Swedish Passenger Arrivals in New York: 1820–1850;* the other is Dr. Ulf Beijbom's book.*

It is significant that a Swedish scholar of high standing has written an authoritative and scholarly study that pinpoints the origin and development of Chicago's Swedish colony, which in 1870 represented the greatest concentration of Swedes in the United States. The significance to Chicago of this national migratory movement has been documented by Beijbom with impressive statistical and historical material. He appears not to have missed any aspect of his subject.

There are eighty-five tables that required research of the highest order and an amazingly broad spectrum of sources. Dr. Beijbom has shown a true scholar's determination and patience in "seeking, sifting and selecting," (to use Carl Sandburg's words) important and significant material to produce a study that is a model of its kind.

Every citizen in this area who has a drop of Swedish blood should own this great study and read it objectively. All others interested in the social aspects of early Chicago, Swedish blood or not, will benefit as well. It seems only appropriate that Beijbom, who had the complete cooperation of the Chicago Historical Society and its staff from the very beginning of his research, should have impressed the Society to the extent that it became one of the book's sponsors.

**Swedes in Chicago: A Demographic and Social Study of the 1846–1880 Immigration,* Ulf Beijbom, trans. Donald Brown. Studia Historica Upsaliensia and the Chicago Historical Society. $12.50.

Forever Free?

BY RICHARD M. BENNETT

LOIS WILLE'S *Forever Open, Clear and Free** is a passionate work that documents Chicago's historic pursuit of its unique destiny of being a great city—an international seaport—that has preserved for the joy of its citizens the beauty and drama of the interaction of land and water while keeping the business of its harbors; the scruffiness of its steel plants; its manufacturing and factories; its railroad yards; and its acres and acres of highways and traffic interchanges mostly behind a nature lover's facade.

Her book is fun to read, and sad. Our treatment of our predecessors, the Indians, was tragic and shameful. So many of the winners and losers of its preservation fight were innocent. Chance, and raw power, were factors, and much that was done badly was not done by bad people. Thousands of lives were lost because of avoidable pestilence, ignorance, filth. So many individuals, so many social and economic forces conspired in the drama that still plays on around the fact that three men—Hubbard, Thornton and Archer—printed on the edge of their map for the building of the Chicago Shipping Canal that beyond its east boundary would be "Public Ground—a Common to Remain Forever Open, Clear and Free of any Buildings, or other Obstruction Whatever." So began an unending fight that has survived losses to the Art Institute, repeated losses to the Illinois Central, parking areas, traffic interchanges and the convention hall.

Offsetting those losses has been the extension of the open lakefront park idea far beyond its original length so that today the goal of succeeding generations will be to have a continuous thirty mile long parkway with scores and scores of recreational areas! And, too, the ultimate lakefront creeps ever eastward, leapfrogging past private developments always seeking to prevent a high-rise wall between the inland sea and our original building sites.

It is almost incredible that the right to build some railroad tracks for the benefit of public transportation has been stepped up to the ownership of hundreds of acres on which billions of dollars worth of building are now going forward. The book warns that the configuration of these future buildings—their planning—should be attracting public attention focused on the possible mischief that may occur without proper constraints.

The book is not scholarly history, and a critic could complain, rightly, that it contains more than a permissible number of errors and misinterpretations. Rather it is of the stuff that makes fighting journalism, drawing lively sketches of good and bad characters; winners and losers, such as the maligned, heroic idealist Montgomery Ward, and the know-where-the-power-is *Tribune* writer, George Tagge. The background material creates a broader picture than just the "save the lakefront" scene. There are pertinent illustrations but, unhappily, no index. There may be fables mixed with the facts but the total portrays a lusty history of our vital, unique, fabulous city, lucky in its origins and so far enjoying hairbreadth, last minute victories which have, up to now, preserved much of our unique lakefront facade.

Now in our second century of protecting that incredible asset, the book concludes with a ten-point outline of present critical issues and threats—a must for concerned citizens who should feel their responsibility of carrying on our trust, who want to add their names to the list that has kept our heritage alive. We owe Mrs. Wille a debt for a book which should be useful for those now joining the ranks of people fighting for our common rights and those who will be signing up in the future. That key word "Forever" must be preserved.

Richard M. Bennett is a member of the firm of Loebl, Schlossman, Bennett, and Dart, the architects who planned the suburb of Park Forest.

**Forever Open, Clear and Free*, Lois Wille. Henry Regnery and the Metropolitan Housing and Planning Council, 1972. $7.50.

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Single issues of *Chicago History* are $2.25 a copy by mail.
Library subscriptions are $15 a year.

Paul M.
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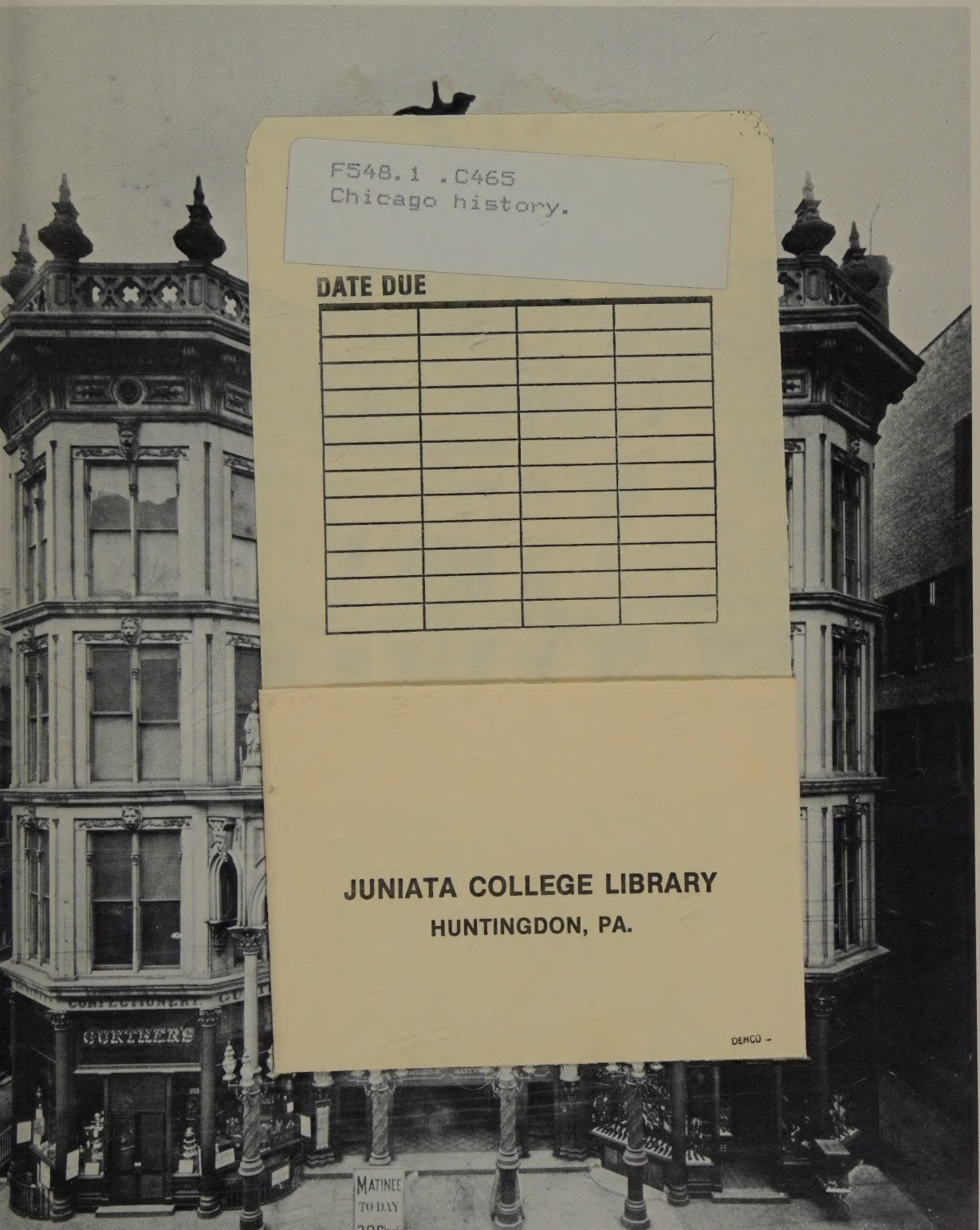
The McVicker's Theatre Building, reopened in 1872, was the first playhouse to be rebuilt after Chicago's Great Fire. Theatregoers could hear opera and musical comedy as well as see drama, and stars and audience alike could sip a soda at Gunther's soda parlor at the corner of the building if they so desired.



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